

This Old House

The Color Issue

Inspiring ideas for every room

PLUS:

Stencil a wall
Build in storage
Add deck lighting
Spray-paint like a pro
Transform kitchen cabinets

SEPTEMBER 2016
THISOLDHOUSE.COM

A close-up, high-angle shot of a car's interior, focusing on the black leather seats. The seats feature prominent gold-colored stitching along the seams and edges. The leather has a fine, pebbled texture. The lighting is dramatic, highlighting the contours and textures of the upholstery.

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on the cover



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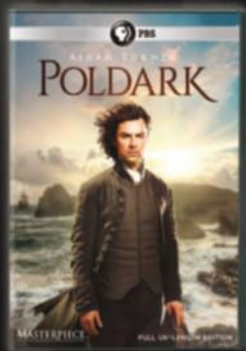
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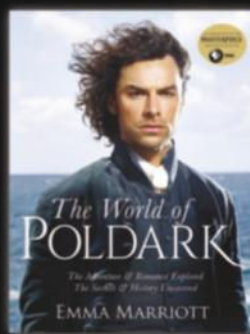


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My color-shy past

For eighteen and a half years, I lived in a house in which almost every room was painted Benjamin Moore's Navajo White. It was a very old house (built in 1842, to be exact), but it had been renovated in the late '80s, when Navajo White was the "It" color.

I kept it for a couple of reasons. First, it was a mellow, creamy off-white that was easy to live with. Second, it was the trim color in most of the rooms that were covered in wallpaper I never would have chosen.

After my husband and I had lived there for a few years, I screwed up my courage and hired someone to take it all down, skim-coat, and paint. Two cheerful guys showed up and started in the bathrooms, then moved on to the master bedroom and dining room. And once they were finished with those five rooms, I could never get them to come back. There is a reason, I learned, why you don't apply wallpaper to drywall without preparing the surface correctly.

And so my default philosophy became paint it white. I veered into alien territory a few times. For the dining room, located partially below grade, I chose a sunny yellow (success). For my husband's office, the billiard-table green was replaced by a soft café au lait (also successful). But when I tried chartreuse—a pale apple green that came out screaming yellow—in the bedroom, my husband, never one to issue edicts, said it had to go. It's giving me a migraine, he said (epic fail).

So Navajo White it was, until we sold the house last summer and the wallpaper became someone else's problem.

I'm telling you all this because this is our annual color issue—the place where we share the vibrant homes whose palettes we most admire. Just looking at Kristie Barnett's dining room (page 82) gives me a thrill. It would never occur to me to pair flax-colored walls with a celery-colored ceiling, then punctuate it with high-shine green molding. Or to choose pink and gray for a kitchen (page 90), much as I love that combination.

I hope that as you turn these pages, you'll be inspired to get out your brushes and collect some new swatches. Take a few chances—you can always paint it over. Just watch out for that chartreuse.




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Reader mail

SEPTEMBER 2016



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WE KNEW YOU SHARED *our love of houses with a rich history, but we were delighted to discover your fondness for taking a look back at your own—whether by recalling a long-forgotten laundry chute or by passing along anecdotes from the Pinewood Derby. Plus, one reader's DIY solution for protecting an outdoor herb garden.*

Thanks for the memories

I laughed when I read “Let’s bring back...” [Home Solutions, July 2016]. Our mid-century modern house once had a laundry chute in a hall closet that emptied into an unfinished basement area. Back in the ’90s, our son’s friend tried to slide down it and got stuck. I remember seeing feet dangling from the basement ceiling and the boy’s fingers clinging to the opening. We closed up the chute after that, much to our kids’ regret.

—KATHY SKOSICH, LITTLETON, CO

I enjoyed “Let’s bring back...” in the July issue. Growing up, I lived in a farmhouse with a clothes chute that went from the second floor down to the basement furnace and laundry—yup, a coal furnace and a wringer washing machine! Right beside the

clothes chute was a dust chute with a cabinet door at floor level that we’d sweep dirt into. I don’t remember how often it was cleaned, but I do recall not knowing what a dustpan was for some time.

—LINDA MAAS, PARKSTON, SD

Derby day nostalgia

“Lessons of the Pinewood Derby” [July 2016] brought back memories of a joint father-son project about 40 years ago. My son participated in his troop’s derby, but I told him I would only supervise and offer limited advice; he would be responsible for the design and build. When he was done, it looked like a beaver with bad teeth had carved out the car, and during the test run the front wheel fell off, but he showed it off proudly. Most of the other Cubs had well-sanded racers their dads had apparently made. My son took a lot of heat from his friends—until his car won the event. He still has that car and the trophy. I was proud of his efforts and the fact that it was his project, not Dad’s.

—THOMAS BITNER, MARSHFIELD, WI

I just read Norm’s piece on the Pinewood Derby. It’s great to hear about his experience in Scouting. I have been in Scouting for more than 20 years, and back when I was a Cubmaster, the derby was the most-liked event in the pack. Now, as a Scoutmaster, I do miss it; however, I am a counselor for the woodworking and wood-carving merit badge. It gives me great joy to work with young men and teach them new skills.

—RICH PROKOP, BURBANK, IL

READER PROJECT OF THE MONTH

Vertical garden

—STEPHANIE BERNIUS, EMERSON, NJ

Our herbs always get eaten by rabbits, so the “living wall” from a past issue looked like a perfect solution. We learned to build the boxes [“PVC Planter with a Cast-Iron Look”] and attach them to pieces of lattice [“Living Wall Vertical Garden”] on thisoldhouse.com. The result is an awesome piece!



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home solutions

Edited by Deborah Baldwin

INSIDE

MOPS WE LOVE

WARM NEW FINISHES

COLORFUL APPLIANCES

MORE

Lacy DIY lanterns

Nothing's lovelier on a late-summer evening than dining by candlelight—as long as a nice breeze doesn't snuff out the flame. We protected ours by wrapping pillars with scraps of radiator screening. The sheets come in a wide variety of patterns and finishes, starting at about \$11 per sheet at the home center. We cut pieces to size using tin snips, then used needle-nose pliers to bend a few loops of wire to close up seams. Later on, when a chill hits the air, you can arrange your glow-makers on a mantel.

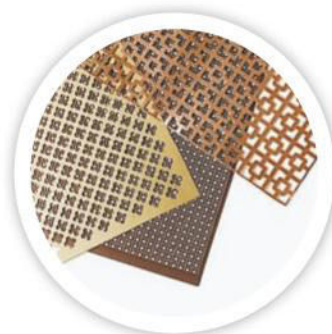


PHOTO: ANDREW MCCAUL



It's time to hit the yard

Cooler temperatures and abundant rainfall are an invitation to tend to what's green and growing

BOLSTER A THIN LAWN Rent a core aerator from the home center (about \$90 per day) to remove plugs of soil from the lawn; run it over damaged sections to improve drainage and get oxygen and nutrients down to the roots. Rake a thin layer of compost into holes. Then sow seed a little heavier than usual and gently mix into the compost with the back of a rake. Water as directed on the seed bag.

DIVIDE AND MULTIPLY PERENNIALS Uprooting plants and pulling them apart may sound cruel, but it actually rejuvenates them. Water well a day or two before digging all the way around a perennial, 6 inches from its base. After prying out the root ball, tease roots apart, leaving groupings of three to five shoots. Share extra bounty with friends.

SAVE SEEDS Be sure to stay ahead of the birds. Snip off seed heads and let them dry for about a month on paper-lined sheet pans. Separate out the dried seeds and slide them into marked envelopes or jars. Now you've got a head start come spring. —SAL VAGLICA

The joy of mopping

In case you missed the mop's recent Hollywood moment—in *Joy*, with Jennifer Lawrence as a 1990s mop mogul—it reminded us that a clean floor is a thing of beauty. As is a tool that tackles the mess underfoot, like one of these star turns.

STRING WRINGER

This Korean invention, perfected by American company Casabella, works a bit like a salad spinner. Press down on the mop in the bucket to spin the microfiber head in soapy water; shift to the stainless-steel basket to wring it out to just damp. The bucket comes equipped with wheels, a detergent dispenser, and a drain that opens and closes over the sink.

Spin Cycle Mop, \$60; casabella.com



WORKS EVERY ANGLE

With its agile swiveling head and removable microfiber pad, this mop gets in and around corners. A built-in sprayer eliminates the need to bend and point and makes a wide arc so the entire pad can get into the act. The pad works dry, too, and can weather 100 trips through the washer/dryer.

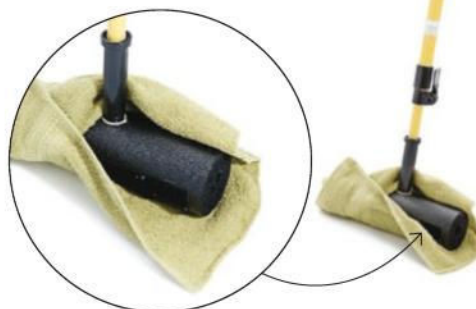
Freedom Spray Mop, by Libman, \$20; target.com



HARD HEADED

Invented by Oregon-based cleaning maven Mary Findley, a.k.a. Mary Moppins, this mop's dense foam head offers good leverage and a Velcro band to hold a terry or microfiber cloth. The telescoping handle allows you to tackle a car hood or cobwebs on high, too. Just rinse the cloth and reuse.

Best Home Mop Plus, \$59 (towel included); goclean.com





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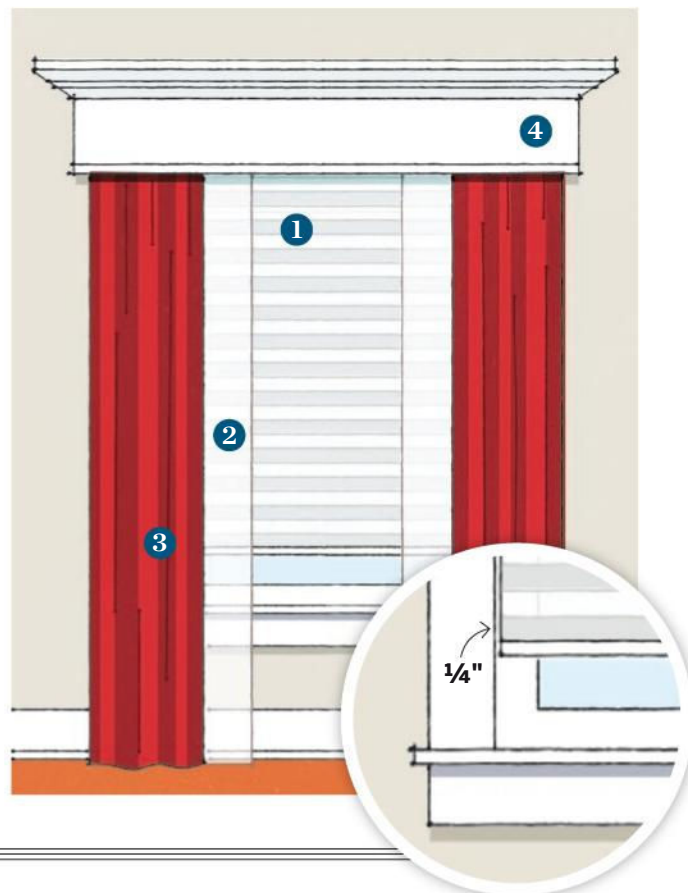
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BEAT
DRAFTS

Dress windows in layers

Heat that goes out the window accounts for up to a quarter of heating bills, according to the U.S. Department of Energy. No need to cloak panes in winter woolens (though that might work). Cut your losses with stylish layers instead.

- 1. Cellular shades** can reduce heat loss by up to 31 percent—if they are installed correctly. They come single, double, or triple cell; more cells means more insulation. Hang cellular shades inside the window frame, a half-inch from the glass, with gaps of only a quarter-inch on either side. Raise and lower them with the sun to take advantage of solar heat gain. Wipe down any condensation that forms overnight.
- 2. Sheers** hung on a double rod add privacy and some light control (if not draft resistance) when shades are raised to capture the sun.
- 3. Drapes** just by themselves cut heat loss by about 10 percent—and look nice, too. Choose ones with a tightly woven fabric and a lining. To get the best energy savings, hang curtains about an inch from the window, or as close to that as possible, with a 4-inch overlap at the center.
- 4. A cornice or valance** can button up windows even more by trapping air along the top of the window. These draft blockers must work—they predate central heating, after all. —LAURA TESTINO



Grills that really smoke

You can buy a single-purpose smoker to bump up your brisket and ribs, but why not retrofit the charcoal or gas grill you already own? Choose high-tech, or go with wood chips in a box or plain old tin foil.



Place a smoker box over a lit burner or glowing coal bed. This version holds about an hour's worth of wood chips. Stainless Steel Smoker Box, \$25; weber.com

FOR THE SUPERCHEF

While pricey, the CyberQ (\$330; bbqguru.com) does most of the work. Just drill a hole in the side of a kettle (charcoal) grill and attach the fan, clip a temperature probe to the grate, and place another one in the meat. Then add wood chunks to the burning coals. Punch in a temperature—pork shoulder should be slow-smoked at 225°F—and the fan will keep the heat steady for 12 hours. If your Wi-Fi extends to the yard, you can monitor all this work from afar.

FOR THE HANDS-ON COOK

An inexpensive metal smoker box made of steel or cast iron can go right on top of the grill grate, as shown at left. Fill it with wood chips sold for smoking; these range from mild-flavored apple and hickory to robust mesquite. Chips will smoke sooner if you preheat the box when you light the grill or use a low-profile model that fits between burner and grate. Refill it as needed while you monitor the grill's temperature.

FOR THE LOW-TECH GRILLER

Fold aluminum foil into a pouch, sealing two sides. Fill the pouch with wood chips or smaller wood smoking pellets, crimp it closed, and poke a few holes in one side with a knife. This method should last just long enough to deliver a quick blast of smoke. For longer, low-and-slow smoking sessions, toss golf-ball-size wood chunks directly onto the charcoal. You remembered the tangy BBQ sauce, right? —S.V.



Spray-paint tips

It's arguably the easiest way to transform any object, but there's still a thing or two to know about getting a flawless finish when using spray paint

> **Set up a workspace.** "For larger pieces, I build what I call a stage, to keep the piece at working height," says Amy Howard, whose eponymous DIY line includes spray lacquer. Think sawhorses; for small items, a lazy Susan will do the trick.

> **Watch the weather.** "Make sure the temperature is above 40 degrees," says Victor Ving, a graffiti artist in New York who does commercial work. "When it's colder than that, the pressure in the paint can drops." And, you know, don't try to paint when it's about to rain.

> **Pay attention to prep.** "Spray paint's glossy finish highlights imperfections, so before painting, sand, clean, rinse, and dry thoroughly," says Ace Hardware's Janet Davidson. For vibrant light colors, like yellow, Ving recommends a spray-on primer.

> **Go slow.** "Spray in long, even passes," says Howard, "and overlap your last pass for good coverage." To avoid drips, instead of pointing the nozzle at the surface, position it about 8 inches away and sweep it across. Finally, says Davidson, "Spray the entire object, let it dry, and apply a complete second coat. Don't do one half, then the other half later." —KATELIN HILL

ILLUSTRATION: ARTHUR MOUNT

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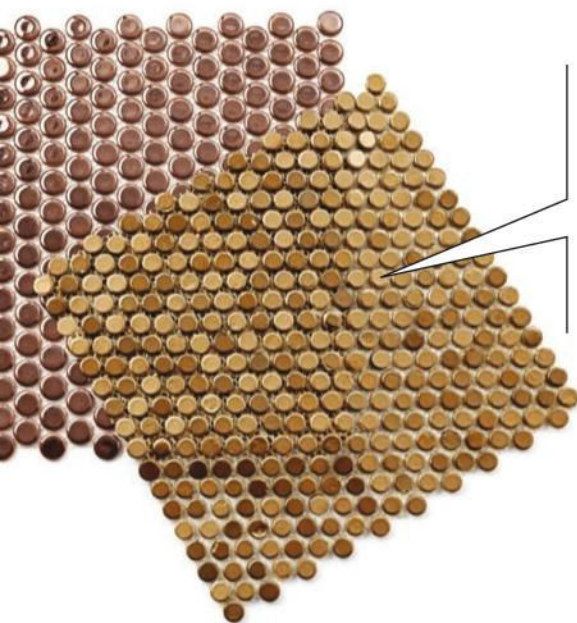


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Warming trend

While gleaming silvery finishes have reigned for years, warmer hues like yellow gold, brass, and even rose gold are moving in fast. Along with their rich, lustrous glow, these new tones can give classic designs, like those shown here, a whole new look. —MICHELLE BRUNNER



Making cents

Unglazed porcelain rounds made their debut in baths and kitchens in the early 20th century. When rendered in *shiny or matte gold*, they offer a contemporary edge.

Hudson Penny Round Antique Gold (far left), about \$9 per square foot, and Comet Penny Round Gold, about \$14 per square foot; homedepot.com



Polished up

A classic 1930s bistro chair—merely hardworking and indestructible in galvanized steel—turns sleek and chic in a *rose gold* metallic finish.

Zuo Elio Modern Rose Gold Dining Chair, \$258; lampsplus.com



Tradition with a twist

A humble cross-handle faucet with period-style porcelain buttons acquires newfound glamour in another one of this year's hot finishes, *unlacquered brass*, which only gains character as time goes by.

Highgate Low Profile Three Hole Deck Mounted Faucet in unlacquered brass, \$729; waterworks.com



Shown: Elmira Stove Works' Northstar Model 1950

Thinking of adding a colorful appliance?



We asked Dave Burcher, a kitchen designer in New York City, to weigh in.

A zingy workhorse like the retro-style fridge shown above can be the centerpiece of a new or existing kitchen. Here, Burcher suggests strategies for knitting it together with the rest of the room.

► KEEP THE WHOLE PALETTE IN MIND

"Let's say your heart's set on a range in cobalt blue or Ferrari red. Take a look at furnishings or fabrics to find colors that would look good with it—these things can provide a context for your accent color. An Oriental carpet might suggest pairing a blue fridge with reddish-brown cabinets; gray walls and cabinets would complement a red range."

► CONSIDER WHITE AS A BACKDROP

"It's an easy solution, and of course white cabinets and walls would allow the appliance to really stand out."

► ANOTHER OPTION: BLEND IT IN

"If you are incorporating an appliance in a soft color, like sage green, consider painting the walls and cabinets to match. It's especially worth thinking about if the kitchen is open and you want to highlight a color without the space seeming busy."

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Made to order

This kitchen cooks as good as it looks, thanks to a high-functioning layout, smart storage, and a walk-in pantry that's a second prep-and-cleanup zone

BY CHARLOTTE BARNARD

PHOTOGRAPHS BY BRIANNE WILLIAMS

➔ **STORAGE TOPS A LOT OF** homeowners' kitchen wish lists. For Liz and Mike McBride, this was to address health concerns as much as organizational ones. Two of their three sons follow special diets due to food allergies, making separate storage and prep areas a must. When the family moved into their home in Fort Mill, South Carolina, the eat-in kitchen featured builder-grade cabinets, a bi-level island, and appliances crowded into one corner. While it was spacious, it didn't really meet their needs.

Working with designer Mary Ludemann, they set about maximizing space with a larger storage island that also fits the cooktop and a couple of stools. Custom cabinetry puts every inch of wall space to work. But the most innovative solution: a separate butler's pantry carved out of the small adjacent dining room, which allows safer meal prep for kids who have to avoid certain ingredients. Quartz counters, stone tiles, and wood floors warm both spaces, as do splashes of bright orange, Liz's favorite color. "This setup makes unorganized me extremely organized," says Liz. "Everything has its place. And the place makes sense!"

BEFORE A bi-level island hemmed in the cook and provided insufficient prep space, without concealing clutter. A dark palette reinforced the dreariness.

AFTER A square island with cabinets and shelves on three sides supplements increased storage space in new wall cabinets, to maintain order.



BEFORE

Glass-front upper cabinets help the owner keep dishes organized on sight.





homeowner tip

LIZ McBRIDE,
FORT MILL, SC

“A square island really lets you maximize storage, while allowing a cooktop that faces whoever’s around.”



Nice for spices

The pullouts on the cook’s side of the island are among Liz’s favorite features: “I can grab what I need without leaving the stove.” She organizes from top to bottom by most frequent use. Pots and pans are stowed in the island drawers under the cooktop. *Paint (island): Benjamin Moore’s Fall Harvest*



Command central

Liz feeds a family of five and entertains often, too, so she requires loads of storage for cookware and serving dishes. Drawers and cabinets on both walls and the island keep what she needs right where she needs it, minimizing steps. The cooktop features a downdraft vent, so no call for a hood overhead. *Appliances: KitchenAid*



FOR THE UP-ALL-NIGHTERS
AND THE UP-ALL-NIGHTERS.



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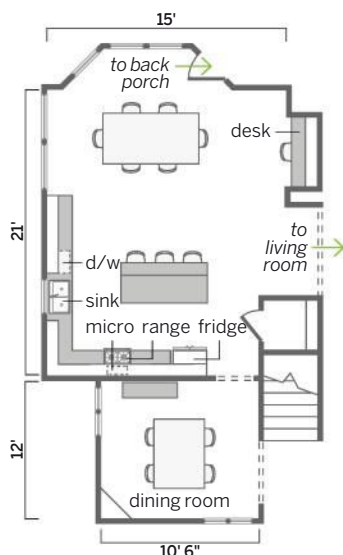
Open shelves let the owner see at a glance what needs replacing from the market.

Open yet unseen

The butler's pantry includes a sink, a dishwasher, and a fridge, so Liz can prep her sons' meals with ingredients that are kept separate. Open shelves also hold safe snacks the kids can help themselves to. And when Liz hosts a big meal, the pantry acts as a catchall for dirty dishes hidden from view. Sink: Luxart

before

The 132-square-foot cook space was jammed into one corner, and stock cabinets didn't tap every inch

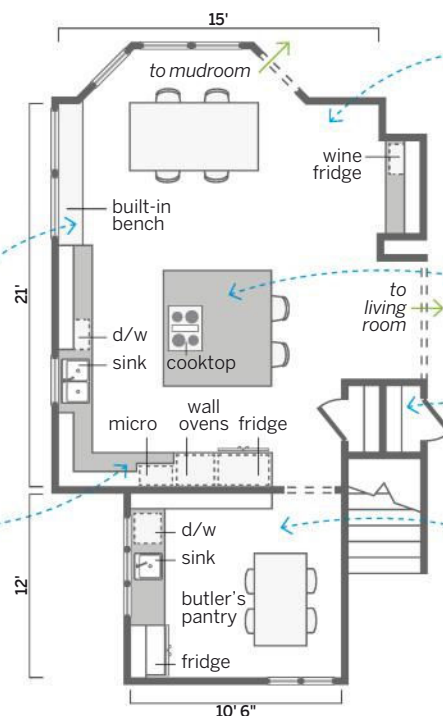


after

Turning a small dining room into a butler's pantry allowed for a separate prep space

1. Left the sink and dishwasher in place; added a built-in bench with storage under the seat at the end of the cabinet run.

2. Kept the fridge location; swapped the range for wall ovens and added a cooktop to the new island.



3. Improved flow by removing a door swing and tucked the table into the bay; replaced a desk with a bar and serving counter.

4. Built a square island with storage on three sides and seating.

5. Gave up half the pantry closet for a coat closet in the entry.

6. Made the small dining room into a separate prep, storage, and cleanup zone; lost the foyer access.

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Neat and tidy

A simple rearrangement of task areas takes advantage of vertical space to make cleanup easier for both two- and four-legged family members

BY BERNADETTE BACZYNSKI • PHOTOGRAPHS BY RICKY RHODES

→ **EVEN A LAUNDRY ROOM** that's fully functional can be improved to accommodate a family's evolving needs. In the case of Barbara and Edward Marshall of Akron, Ohio, their mixed-breed dogs, Roxy and Bella, dictated changes by claiming the 6½-by-8½-foot laundry room as their master suite. The pair, who like to get muddy on the Marshalls' large property, needed frequent bathing, which involved Barb or Ed lifting the dogs into the room's small utility sink. The dogs also liked to sleep in the middle of the room—which has separate entries to the kitchen, garage, and deck—so everyone had to step over them.

Barbara knew she needed a shower stall for the dogs, and contractor Ken Perrin was brought in to make it happen. Installing a stacked washer and dryer freed space for a shower with a commercial hand sprayer to regulate water flow. The shower is also used for cleaning muddy boots and gardening tools, and for hanging the grandkids' swimsuits. The dogs' bed is now tucked into the middle cabinet under the drawer. "Ken measured the dogs to be sure they'd fit," says Barbara. "Now the room works for everyone."



BEFORE Appliances, cabinets, and a small utility sink lined one wall. The awkward setup meant the owners had to lift dogs to bathe them.

AFTER Tapping vertical space on the same wall made room for a shower stall and a dog bed, where Roxy relaxes. Washer, dryer: Samsung. Paint: Sherwin-Williams's Big Chill (walls), Elli Gray (cabinets)



homeowner tip

BARB MARSHALL,
AKRON, OH

**“In a tight space,
it comes down to
inches—measure
carefully so there’s
room for all the
functions you need.”**

An easy-care quartz counter is used for folding clothes. The upper cabinet stows supplies for laundry; the drawer holds small tools. Countertop: Cambria



Placing the handshower on one of the side walls keeps it within arm’s reach. The penny-round tile floor ensures no slipping. Tile: American Olean. Shower mixer: Moen. Sprayer: T&S

A rack by the back door holds dog-walking necessities.



after

A stacked washer and dryer where the utility sink stood frees up space on the wall for the shower and built-in dog bed

before

Three entries to the laundry room limited appliance placement

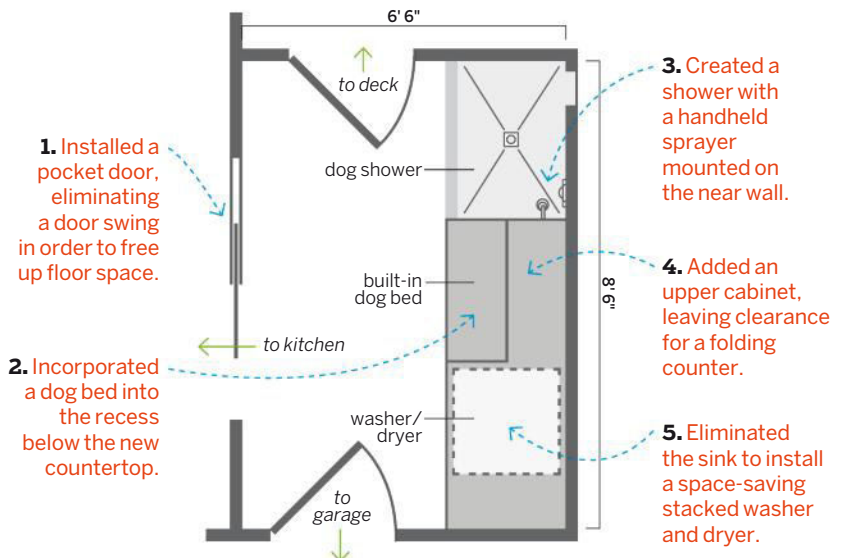
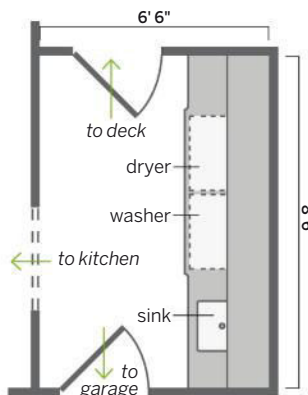


PHOTO: ANTHONY TEJUL

This Old House

LUMBER LIQUIDATORS

Branching out

Create a whimsical drop-off zone with a delicate stencil and a band of bold color

BY DEBORAH BALDWIN • PHOTOGRAPH BY ANDREW McCAUL

➔ **HARDWORKING** mudrooms and entryways deserve a focal point that goes beyond book bags and rain gear. In this Hoboken, New Jersey, rowhouse, a lone built-in bench became a pulled-together outdoor scene, complete with a lively, eye-level avian assortment—plus resting places for outerwear—made possible in part by a purchased stencil and five shades of paint.

We started by smoothing and priming the bench and walls and putting down base coats of white and green (Benjamin Moore's Perennial), both in a satin finish. Then, armed with a large stencil called Birds in Trees Allover (\$43; cuttinggestencils.com), we mapped out an airy triplicate that called for staggering the heights of the trees and eliminating some of the branches and birds. A level and some gentle tweaking of those delicate limbs kept our forest scene looking tidy. (Tip: Create a touch-up kit with small jars of the paint. Just in case.) Today, in return, it helps keep a well-used entry tidy—and cheerful to boot.



FOR STEP-BY-STEP INSTRUCTIONS, TURN THE PAGE ➔



STEP-BY-STEP



1] Tape off a midline and roll on the second color Use a paint tray and a roller cover with a $\frac{3}{8}$ -inch nap to put down the second base color. Peel up the tape before the paint dries.



2] Map out a design After playing with the stencil's position and the number of repeats, use tape to edit out some of the birds and branches. A clip-on level (\$13; cuttingedgestencils.com) can help keep your treetops in a straight line.



3] Stencil on paint Spray repositionable adhesive on the back of the stencil and press in place. To reduce bleeding, run a dense foam roller through just 2 tablespoons of paint, then over a folded paper towel before applying the paint with light to medium pressure.



4] Go back in for the birds Put dollops of paint (we used leftovers from other projects) on a foam plate and dab them with stiff stencil brushes—one per color. To reduce bleeding, make a few circles before rubbing off more paint on a folded paper towel. Pounce on the paint.



5] Remove the stencil and touch up any bleeding Carefully peel up the stencil as soon as you're finished painting. Sharpen the limbs' outlines and repair any blips with a fine artist's brush.



6] Add hooks When the accent colors are completely dry, install hooks at different levels, using the correct anchors for drywall or plaster. Now toss a hat or two in the branches and enjoy the scene. 🏠



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Colorful kitchen for \$335

A cheery paint scheme and clever stencil work turn a drab cook space into one that's warm and inviting **BY KATELIN HILL**



THE PROJECT TALLY

Removed a couple of cabinet doors to create open shelving.....**\$0**

Painted cabinets and partition cubbies with a gallon of discounted "oops" paint and freshened walls with a coat of bright white.....**\$35**

Stenciled the open space below the vaulted ceiling and the lower half of the partition wall with a floral pattern using leftover paints.....**\$50**

Refreshed the kitchen floor with engineered hardwood.....**\$250**

TOTAL \$335



BEFORE

BEFORE The kitchen had a decent amount of storage and a functional layout, but looked like it hadn't been updated in the 30-plus years since it was built.

AFTER A handful of cosmetic upgrades, including a new floor and a lively paint scheme, brightened the space—and the whole living area in the home's open-concept first floor.

➔ **AFTER YEARS OF RENTING**, most new homeowners are more than ready to put their personal stamp on their first place. When Haleigh and Grant DeRocher bought their duplex in Ranchester, Wyoming, the kitchen's generous square footage and overall functionality made it an upgrade from their previous rentals, but its aesthetics did not. To inject a little of the couple's personality into the room, Haleigh hit the home center with an open mind and found a gallon of discounted green paint on the "oops" shelf. Deciding it was the perfect color to transform the dark wood cabinets, she gave them a single coat, then removed a couple of doors to display cookbooks and dishes. The couple had planned to replace the laminate butcher-block countertops, which didn't go with the old cabinetry, but changed their minds after seeing the cabinets' paint transformation, saving hundreds. Next, to make the triangle of bare wall above the cabinetry less awkward and more of a focal point, Haleigh stenciled on a floral pattern, achieving the look of the wallpaper she had originally wanted but couldn't justify splurging for. New engineered hardwood, which the couple laid themselves throughout the first floor, unifies the kitchen with the rest of the rooms. Haleigh, who blogs at sweetsequels.com, loves the impact the bright new kitchen has made on their home, adding, "It has changed the mood of the entire house!" 🏡



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Butterfly hinges

Try these symmetrical, surface-mount hinges on inset cabinet doors in need of a style metamorphosis

BY JEREMY LANGE • PHOTOGRAPHS BY ANDREW MCCAUL

➔ **NAMED FOR THEIR** ornamental, mirror-image leaves, or wings, butterfly hinges have been allowing everything from cupboards to shutters to trunks—anything with a door or a flap or a lid—to gracefully swing open and closed for centuries. “While these hinges enjoyed a peak in popularity from the 1870s to the 1930s, some forms can be traced back as far as medieval England, or more recently, to colonial America,” says hardware historian and architectural consultant Bo Sullivan. Today they are a quick way to give kitchen cabinets and other built-ins a decorative boost and a shot of vintage style. Here, 10 we lit upon that are sure to please.



scalloped edges

HARDWARE HUT

Made of: Steel with an oil-rubbed-bronze finish
Size: 2⅜"W × 2¼"H

Highlights: This decorative winged shape is a classic. \$2.23 per pair; hardwarehut.com



to the point

HOUSE OF ANTIQUE
HARDWARE

Made of: Steel with a bronze finish

Size: 3¾"W × 1¾"H

Highlights: Elongated leaves give this faithful reproduction Gothic flair. \$4.29 per pair; houseofantiquehardware.com



wrought look

SIGNATURE HARDWARE

Made of: Cast iron

Size: 2⅞"W × 3⅜"H

Highlights: This shapely style, with roots in the Middle Ages, boasts dramatic, sculptural lines. \$5.95 each; signaturehardware.com



ornate appeal

HOUSE OF ANTIQUE
HARDWARE

Made of: Lacquered cast iron

Size: 2½"W × 1¼"H

Highlights: This hinge's fleur-de-lis decoration is pure Victoriana. \$7.09 per pair; houseofantiquehardware.com

squared away

VAN DYKE'S RESTORERS

Made of: Steel with an antique-copper finish

Size: 2 $\frac{3}{8}$ "W x 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ "H

Highlights: This angular style would suit a Craftsman interior. \$7.07 per pair; vandykes.com



serpentine

SIGNATURE HARDWARE

Made of: Hand-forged iron with an ebony finish

Size: 1 $\frac{5}{8}$ "W x 2 $\frac{3}{4}$ "H

Highlights: This Gothic-style hinge boasts the look of hammered metal. \$7.95 each; signaturehardware.com



primitive appeal

VAN DYKE'S RESTORERS

Made of: Steel with an antique-rust finish

Size: 3 $\frac{3}{8}$ "W x 2"H

Highlights: This strap style hits just the right rustic note. \$4.86 each; vandykes.com



winged beauty

HOUSE OF ANTIQUE HARDWARE

Made of: Steel with a satin black-lacquer finish

Size: 2"W x 2 $\frac{1}{4}$ "H

Highlights: This simple flared design recalls the handwrought work of colonial-era blacksmiths. \$4.89 per pair; houseofantiquehardware.com



sharp lines

HARDWARE HUT

Made of: Steel with an oil-rubbed-bronze finish

Size: 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ "W x 2"H

Highlights: Pointed leaves add distinction to this circa-1900 model. \$3.03 per pair; hardwarehut.com



pint-size

VAN DYKE'S RESTORERS

Made of: Steel with an antique-copper finish

Size: 2"W x 1 $\frac{1}{16}$ "H

Highlights: This delicate model would complement a small-scale door. \$5.35 per pair; vandykes.com



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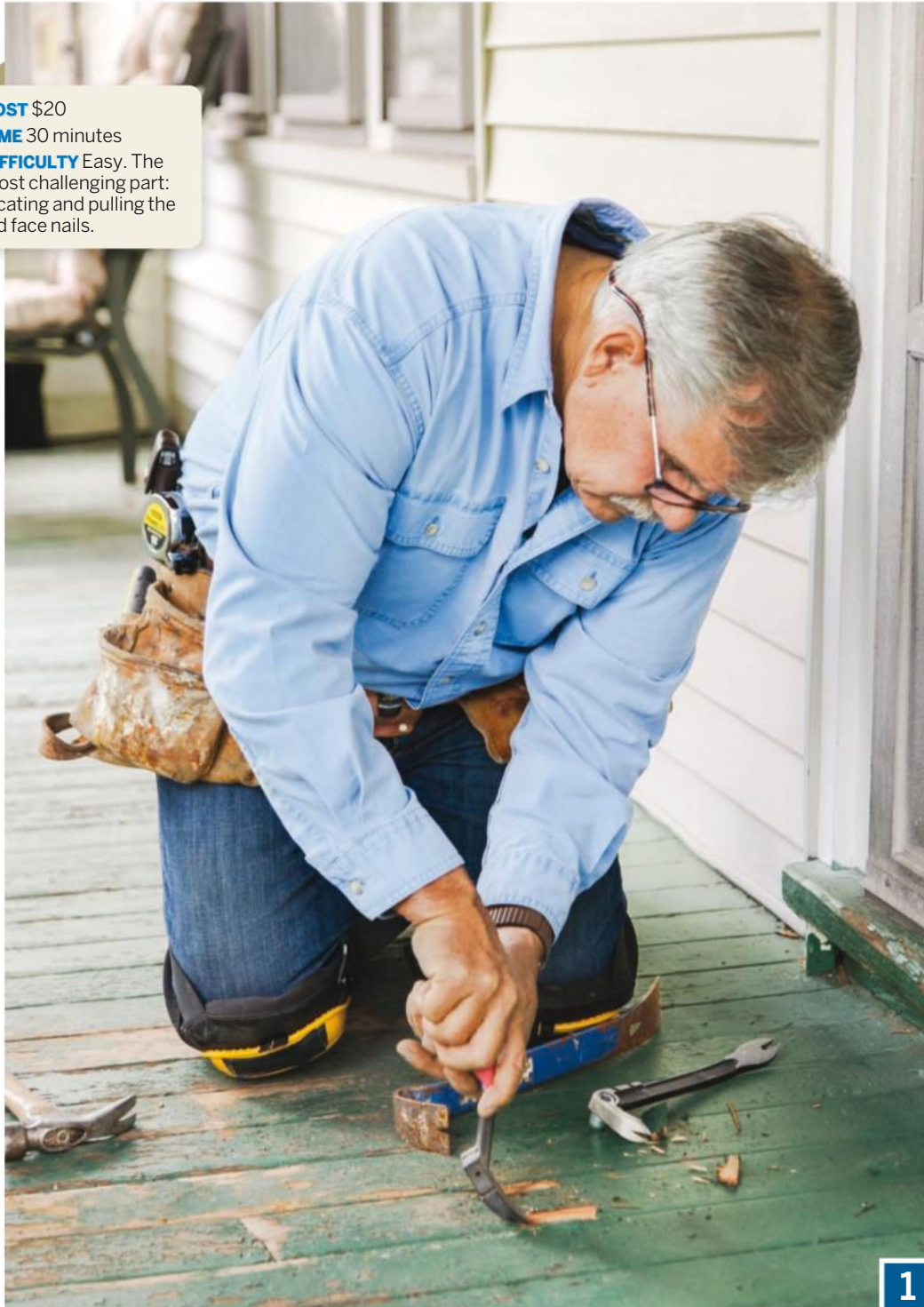
Porch floor patch-up

TOH general contractor Tom Silva eliminates a tripping hazard by replacing a broken board **BY THOMAS BAKER • PHOTOGRAPHS BY ANTHONY TIEULI**

COST \$20

TIME 30 minutes

DIFFICULTY Easy. The most challenging part: locating and pulling the old face nails.



1

TOOLBOX

- > cat's paw
- > hammer
- > pry bar
- > tape measure
- > saw
- > caulk gun
- > construction adhesive
- > drill/driver
- > 2" stainless-steel screws
- > 8d galvanized nails
- > nailset

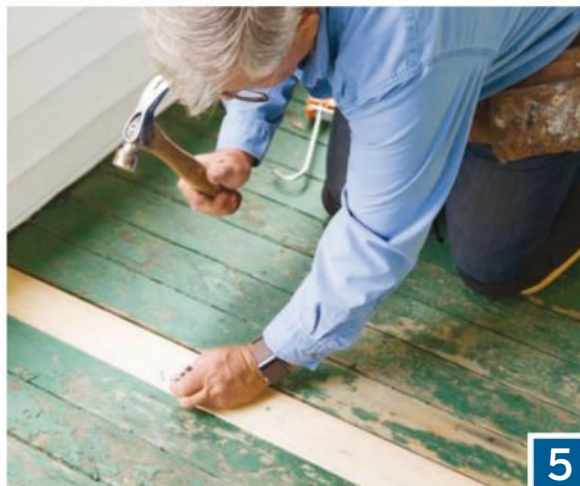
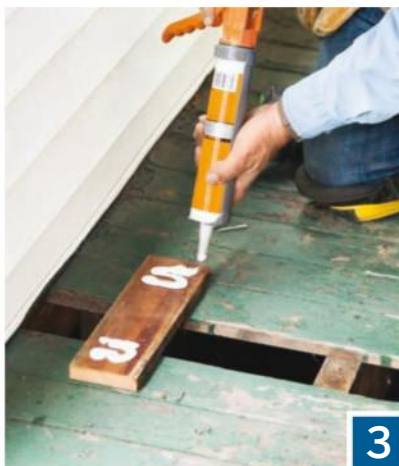


PURR POWER

When a nail must come out and saving the surface of the wood isn't a priority, grab a cat's paw. Place its claws next to the doomed fastener at a 45-degree angle and hammer the head into the wood until the claws straddle the nail shaft. If they don't grab, place the cylindrical knuckle over the nailhead, whack the tool with a hammer to create a recess, and try again. Then rock the handle. That leaves the nail no choice but to back out.



Shown: 10-inch claw bar, \$15; dewalt.com



STEP-BY-STEP

1] Pull the nails These square-edged deck boards were face-nailed to the joists. To remove a board, Tom looks for a telltale row of nailheads, then uses a cat's paw to pry out each nail in the board. If a nail is missing a head, he uses nail-pulling pliers, as shown.

2] Remove the broken board With the nails gone, Tom jams a pry bar under the break, levers up one end of the board, and pulls it out. He does the same at the other end. Scoring the paint along the joint on the board's edges eases removal.

3] Make the cleats To support the ends of the new board, Tom cuts a pair of cleats out of the cracked board, making each three times longer than its width. He squeezes construction adhesive on the ends of the unpainted face, as shown.

4] Install the cleats Tom snugs a cleat, adhesive side up, under the neighboring boards and drills pilot holes through the deck and into it. He secures it with stainless-steel trim-head screws, as shown. The cleat at the opposite end goes in the same way.

5] Cut and fasten the new board Tom uses clear Douglas fir because it's more stable and holds paint better than a cheaper wood. He cuts a single board to length, beds it in adhesive at each joist and cleat, and secures it at those locations with two hot-dip-galvanized 8d nails, placed ½ inch from the edges.

6] Set the nailheads Using a nailset, Tom taps the nailheads a hair below the board's surface. They'll be invisible after the wood gets a coat of oil-based exterior primer and two coats of deck paint. ■



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Perking up a plain Cape

A gable-topped entry porch and a new dormer help give a flat facade major curb appeal **BY MICHELLE BRUNNER • ILLUSTRATION BY DRAWGATE INC.**

A trimmed-out triangular attic vent with louvers becomes an architectural bonus.



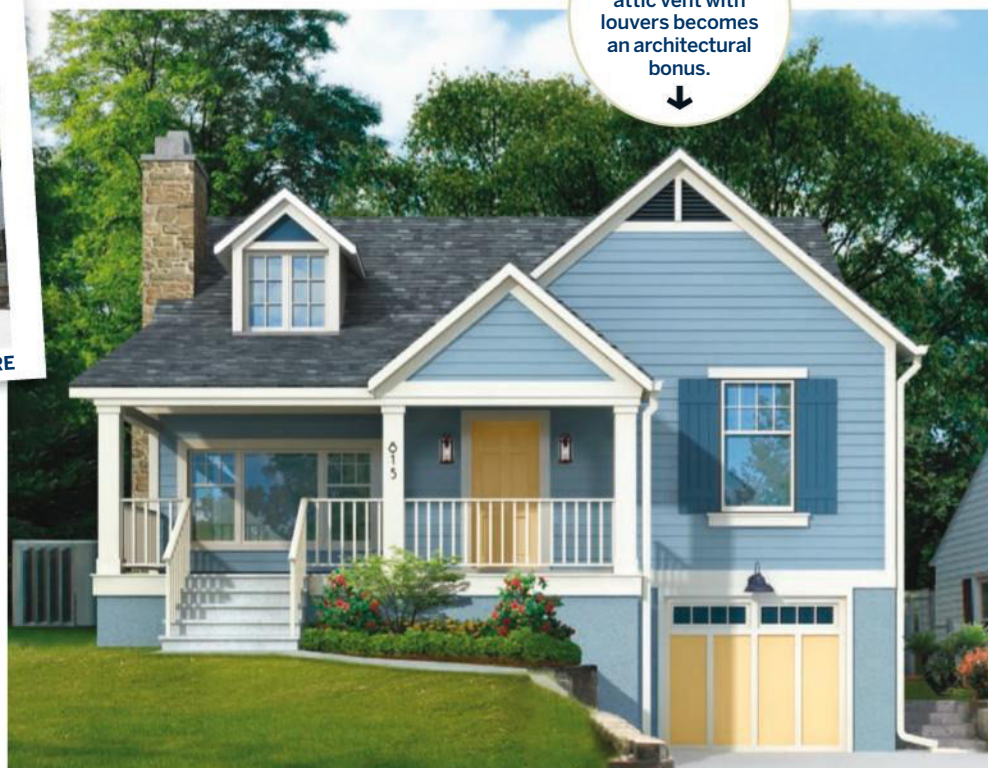
BEFORE

→ **“HELP US** make our house more inviting,” wrote Brian Cornelius, who lives in this 1939 Cape Cod in Omaha with his wife, Caley, and their two daughters. So *TOH* turned to local architect Jackson Martis for some ideas.

“With no roof trim or overhangs to give it depth, the house looks flat,” says Martis. His remedy: Extend the main roof to create a true front porch. A gabled portico over the front door makes the entry more welcoming, as does reorienting the stairs toward the street. The addition of a dormer balances the new facade. Divided-light windows, a carriage-style garage door, and a louvered vent detail at the main gable peak add cottage charm. Resurfacing the concrete-block foundation with painted stucco gives the exterior a cohesive look. Says Brian, “Wow! We love the new porch and roofline—it’s exactly what the house needs.”

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finishing touches

Updated decorative elements and a pleasing palette dial up the charm



house numbers

These stainless-steel digits stand up to direct sunlight, thanks to a durable, UV-resistant powder coating. Wayfair; from \$18 each



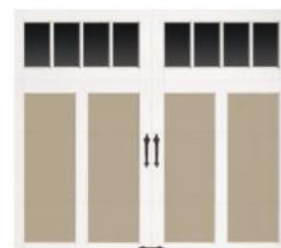
paint

Deep blues and creamy white bring out the details of this Cape; yellowish accents add punch. Glidden’s Paris Sky Blue, Midship Blue, and Flaxen Hair; \$24 per gallon



sconce

Distressed-wood trim, seeded glass, and an Edison bulb give this modern metal sconce a warm, industrial look. Lowe’s; \$69



garage door

With flat panels and a top row of windows, this overhead door offers carriage styling and modern convenience. Clopay; starting at \$1,400



A farmhouse for the future

A fresh take on a traditional style, our 2016 Idea House combines classic charm with 21st-century sustainability **BY JILL CONNORS**

➔ **THE FARMHOUSE** is having a revival, and it's easy to see why. With its simple lines and casual sensibility, it has a timeless, no-place-like-home appeal. To capture that spirit and combine it with leading building technologies that maximize energy efficiency, This Old House has teamed up with NOW Communities and Union Studio Architecture to create The Farmhouse at Emerson Green, a sustainable house in a forward-thinking development on a decommissioned army base in Devens, Massachusetts. The 1,900-square-foot home will average less than half the energy use of a typical house of similar size. Even better, it features low-maintenance materials and an open interior ideal for family living.

Building community

TOH's Idea House is one of the first houses to be built at Emerson Green, a mixed-use development designed to offer net-zero-possible living in a walkable neighborhood filled with traditional architecture. It comes from the same developer-architect team that created Concord Riverwalk in Concord, Massachusetts, an award-winning urban development of small-footprint houses. "These kinds of compact neighborhoods reflect how people want to live," says Union Studio Architecture's Don Powers. "It's great to see Emerson Green coming to life with houses that meet so many goals for energy efficiency, modest square footage, and a strong sense of community."

ABOVE Work is under way at TOH's 2016 Idea House, seen here in an artist's rendering. Its design combines classic farmhouse elements, including a front porch and two-over-one windows, with sustainable building materials and technologies that create a super-energy-efficient building envelope. The result will be a 1,900-square-foot, two-story house that lives lightly on the land and is relatively maintenance-free for the family who will live there.

ILLUSTRATION: UNION STUDIO ARCHITECTURE

Sustainable design

Materials and techniques used in building the house are designed to create a structure with a Home Energy Rating System (HERS) tally of 55 or less, which means the home will use on average 45 percent of the energy of a conventional house of similar size. “The exterior wall construction is a great example of how energy efficient the building envelope is,” says project architect Christina Carlson. An advanced framing technique minimizes thermal bridging—the heat transfer that results when wood studs touch both the exterior sheathing and the interior drywall—by using rigid insulation on the exterior to isolate the studs. Triple-pane windows increase the energy savings, as do high-performance electric water heaters; an air-sourced, high-efficiency, multizone heating and cooling system; supplemental radiant heat; and LED lighting. In addition, a photovoltaic array on the south-facing portion of the garage roof will produce a third of the house’s electricity via solar power.

Sustainable design also means using long-lasting materials that conserve resources, with the bonus of lower maintenance. To that end, the house features fiber-cement siding and trim, cellular PVC decking and trim, vinyl windows, and fiberglass exterior doors.

Modern look and feel

Adding to the appeal of the house is the interior design, which emphasizes comfort and a casual lifestyle. “This is a modern farmhouse that is respectful of New England tradition but has a fresh energy, with updated finishes, some hits of strong color, plus the kind of open layout families want today,” says interior designer Denise Enright. The main staircase, for instance, marries traditional board-and-batten wall cladding with a modern steel-cable rail system. Enhancing the entire house are the open-air spaces: a rear deck and courtyard for private outdoor living, and a rocking-chair porch in front that’s perfect for a chat with passersby. As the big reveal in our next issue will show, this farmhouse feels like a home that’s right for today—and for years to come. 🏡

The team



DAN GAINSBORO
Builder,
NOW Communities



DON POWERS
Principal architect,
Union Studio Architecture



CHRISTINA CARLSON
Project architect,
Union Studio Architecture



DENISE ENRIGHT
Interior designer,
Denise Enright Interior
Design



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Add a little mood lighting to your deck

Use energy-efficient LEDs to cast a warm glow on the deck, stairs, and trees, and you can extend the party (safely) into the night

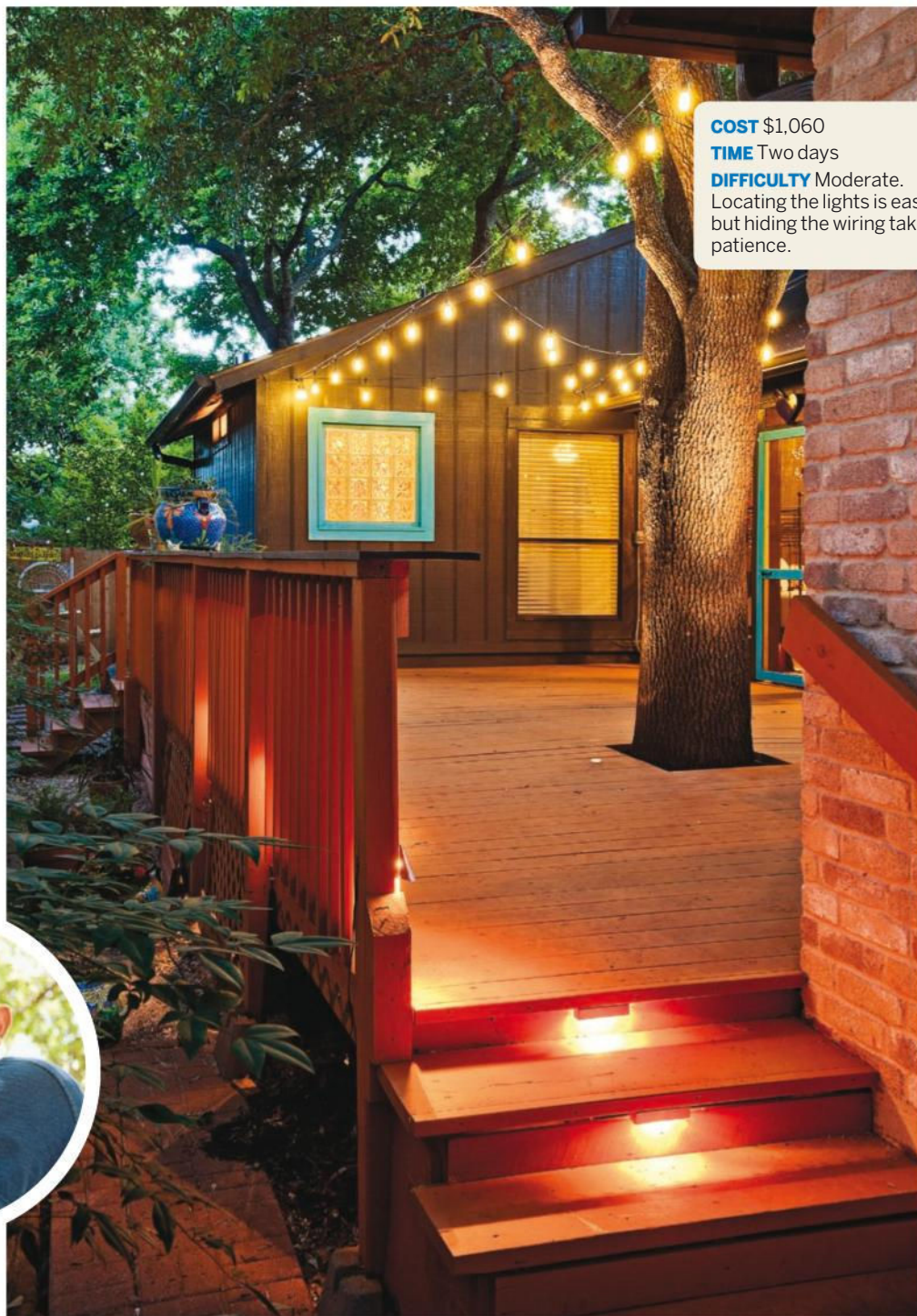
BY SAL VAGLICA • PHOTOGRAPHS BY MATTHEW MAHON

→ **DECKS ARE USUALLY** built with summer days in mind, but the entertaining doesn't have to stop when the sun goes down. Installing outdoor-rated LEDs can illuminate your space in a way that promotes both safe footing and appealing ambience—versus the harsh shadows you get from a spotlight on the house.

“Low-voltage lighting is very DIY-friendly,” says Scott Caron, master electrician for *Ask This Old House*. “The thin wiring is easy to hide on or under the deck.” In addition to putting up festive string lights, he installed three kinds of LEDs on this deck in San Antonio, allowing the homeowners to enjoy their Lone Star evenings. For your own project, start by deciding where to place the transformer, which steps the power down to 12 volts: It needs to plug in to a standard 110-volt outlet, and all your wiring routes back to this point. Follow along as Scott shows you how to upgrade your outdoor space.



Post light, \$92;
LED ledge and rail
light, \$107; up/down
light, \$128; all in
copper, from
Focus Industries;
focusindustries.com



COST \$1,060
TIME Two days
DIFFICULTY Moderate.
Locating the lights is easy,
but hiding the wiring takes
patience.

TOOLS

- > pencil
- > tape measure
- > drill/driver
- > ¼-inch paddle bit
- > circular saw
- > ½-inch pilot bit
- > 2-inch-diameter hole saw
- > wire strippers
- > hex wrench
- > torch or heat gun
- > torpedo level
- > flathead screwdriver

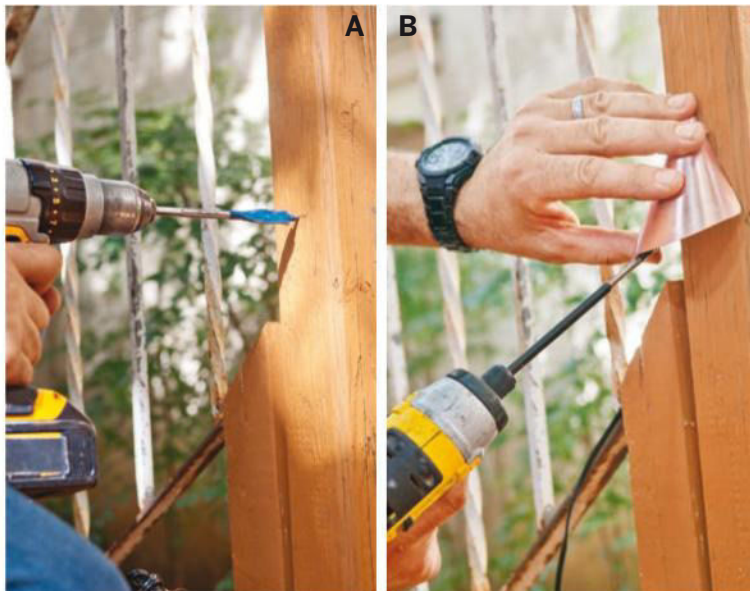
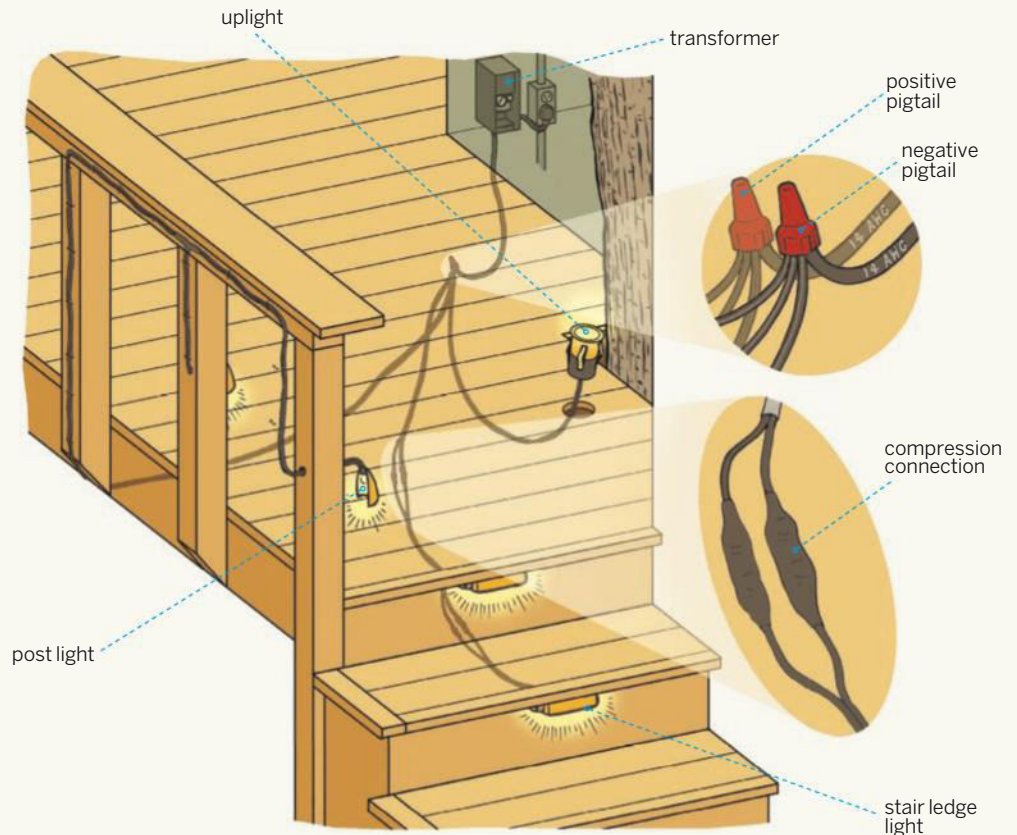
MATERIALS

- > low-voltage wire staples
- > 2×2 pressure-treated pine baluster Get one for each tread.
- > 2-inch deck screws Get four per tread.
- > polyurethane adhesive
- > post lights Get one for each post.
- > ledge lights Get one for each tread.
- > uplights Get one or two per tree.
- > low-voltage compression connections Get a pair for each fixture.
- > 120-volt transformer
- > 14-gauge wire Get a length that will reach from the transformer to the farthest fixture.
- > heat-shrink tubing
- > waterproof wire nuts Get three pairs.

DAY-TO-DAY TIMELINE

SATURDAY Install the lights (Steps 1–3).

SUNDAY Wire the lights to the transformer (Steps 4–5).



1 Install post lights

A] Drill a hole for wiring Mark the center of a post about 12 inches above the deck—high enough for the light to illuminate the decking but not so high that it will blind seated guests. Use a paddle bit to drill a ¼-inch-diameter hole through the post, as shown. Repeat for every post.

B] Screw on post light Fish the LED wire through the housing and fresh hole. Attach the fixture to the post with supplied screws, as shown. Secure the wire to the back side of the post with low-voltage staples. Continue stapling every few inches, carrying the wire to the next fixture by tucking it under the handrail or the deck's framing (you'll wire it later).

2 Add stairway lights

A] Build out the treads The stairway lights mount to the treads overhanging the risers. If your tread doesn't have an overhang of at least 1 inch, add one with a 2×2 pressure-treated pine baluster. Measure the width of the tread and cut the piece to fit with a circular saw. Evenly space pilot holes along the front edge of the baluster for 2-inch deck screws. Attach the fixture to the middle of the baluster with supplied screws, as shown, then repeat the process on the remaining treads.

B] Drill a pass-through Drill a ¼-inch-diameter hole in the riser just below the tread to accept the fixture's wire. Fish the loose end of the wire into the hole, as shown. Repeat the process on the remaining treads.

C] Fasten the fixture in place Add a bead of polyurethane adhesive to the baluster, then screw the baluster to the tread, as shown, oriented with the LEDs facing the step below. Repeat this process on the remaining treads, then stain the balusters to match the deck.



A



B



C

THERE'S MORE!

Watch master electrician Scott Caron install fiesta string lights at thisoldhouse.com/string-lights



A



B

3 Drop in uplights

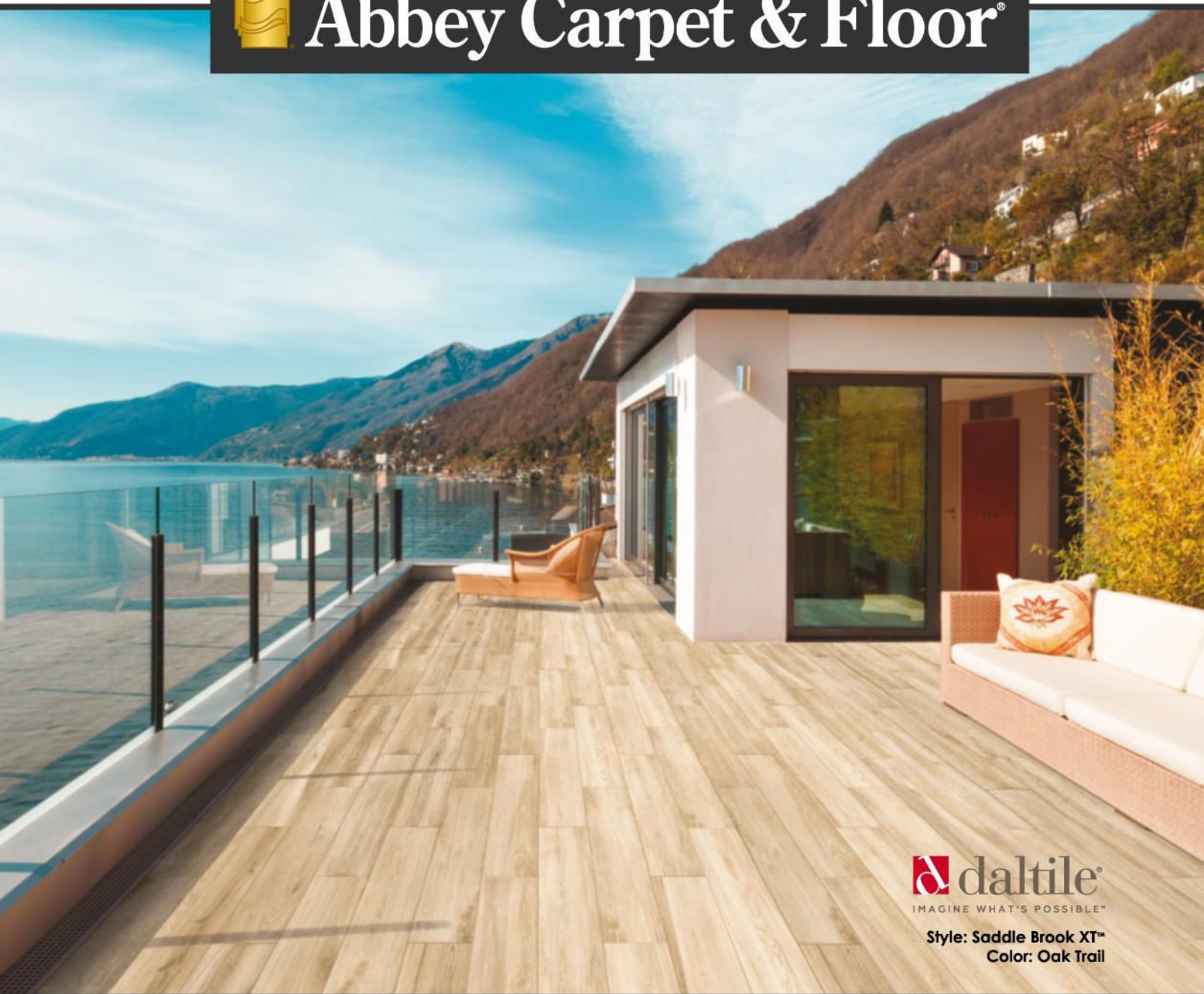
A] Cut a hole Locate uplights in the center of deck boards about a foot from the tree to illuminate the bark and the canopy. Use a 2-inch hole saw to cut a hole for each light.

B] Add lights Thread the wire into the hole, then press-fit the light in place.

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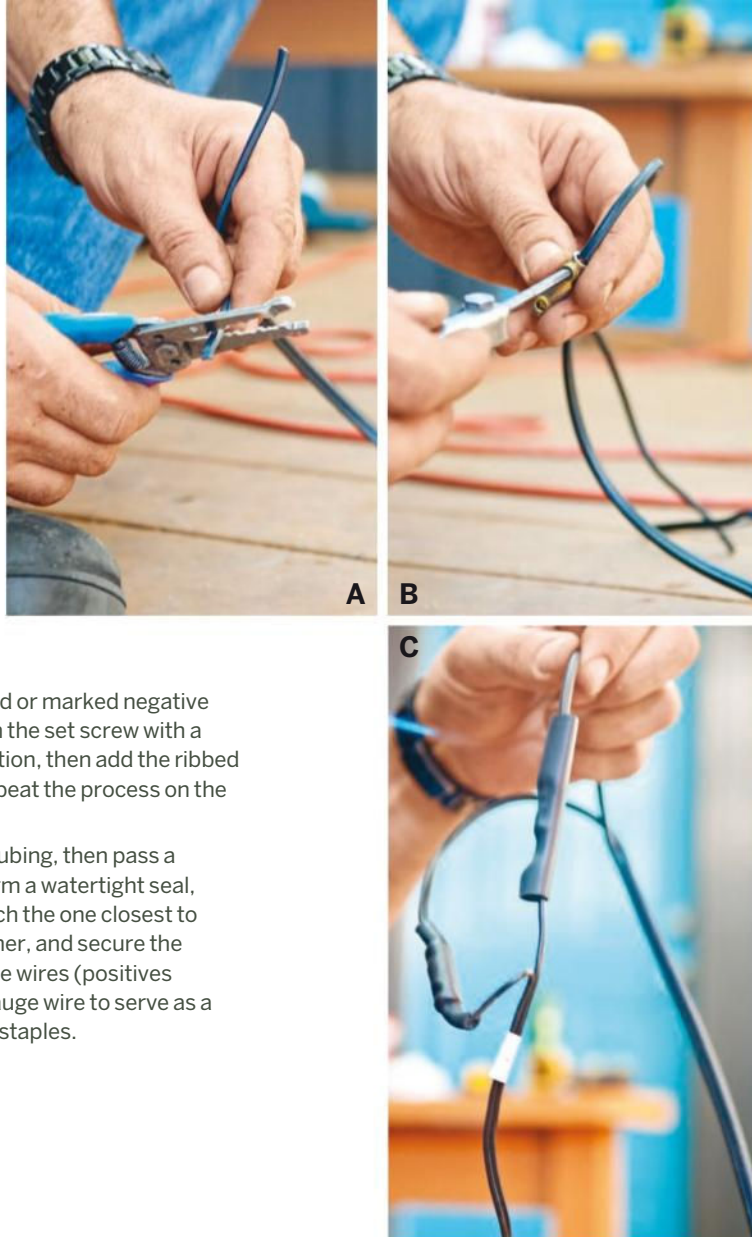
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4 Wire the lights

A] Strip the wires Use 14-gauge wire to daisy chain all the lights of a certain type together—post lights to post lights, for example. To start, use wire strippers to remove about an inch of insulation from the wires attached to the light farthest from the transformer. Measure the distance between this light and the next one and cut a length of 14-gauge wire to that length. Split the 14-gauge wire apart, then strip all four ends.

B] Add compression connections Insert the first light's ribbed or marked negative wire into one end of the brass compression connection and tighten the set screw with a hex wrench, as shown. Slip the heat-shrink tubing over the connection, then add the ribbed 14-gauge wire to the other end of the connection and tighten it. Repeat the process on the smooth or unmarked positive wires of the same fixture.

C] Shrink the wrap Cover the connection with the heat-shrink tubing, then pass a torch or heat gun over the wrap, holding it a few inches away, to form a watertight seal, as shown. Continue daisy chaining lights in the series until you reach the one closest to the transformer. Add enough 14-gauge wire to reach the transformer, and secure the connections with waterproof wire nuts. Now join the three 14-gauge wires (positives together and negatives together) and add another section of 14-gauge wire to serve as a pigtail. Hide the wiring under the deck or secure it out of sight with staples.



5 Add the transformer

A] Mount the box The bottom of the transformer must be at least 1 foot off the ground and within 2 feet of a standard 110-volt outlet. We placed ours inside the house to keep the timer easily accessible. First, use deck screws to attach the mounting bracket to the wall, checking for level with a torpedo level. Attach the transformer to the bracket.

B] Wire the box Bring the pigtail to the box and thread it through the knockout in the bottom, as shown. Use a small flathead screwdriver to tighten the negative wire into the terminal labeled "common" and the positive wire into the 12.5-volt terminal. Plug the transformer into the 110-volt outlet, then flip the switch to test the lights. Set the timer and install the cover. ■



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READ THIS BEFORE YOU

Paint your kitchen cabinets

The right prep, primer, and paint can transform the look of your cupboards—and your entire cook space—without busting the budget **BY SAL VAGLICA • ILLUSTRATIONS BY BROWN BIRD DESIGN**

➔ **IF YOU'VE** noticed the cost of new appliances, countertops, and cabinets, it's no surprise that renovating a kitchen is one of the most expensive remodeling projects. While few homeowners find ways to boost the look of a dated refrigerator or tired granite, transforming a kitchen by freshening the cabinets that make up most of the room's visual space is entirely within reach. But there's more to the job than buying a gallon of your favorite color.

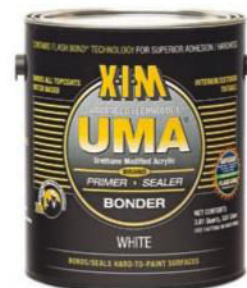
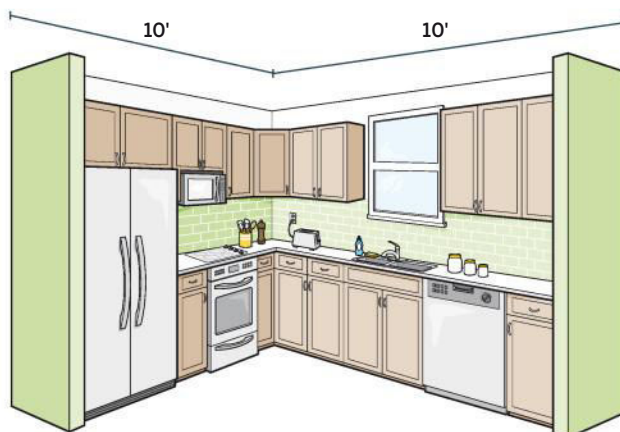
The saying that a successful paint job relies on diligent prep work is fitting when finishing previously coated cabinets. Unlike drywall, cabinets are made out of a variety of materials—from wood to metal—that are then covered with a range of finishes, from oil-based paint to plastics. But armed with the right primer, quality paint, the patience not to rush the process, and a long weekend, a DIYer can overhaul a kitchen without going over budget.

A wall of dark painted cabinets can be stark, but the soft, almost matte finish on the navy-blue doors and drawers in this handsome kitchen fades into the background, leaving the gleaming stainless-steel appliances to shine through.



NEW KITCHEN ON A DIME

Cabinets can account for nearly 40 percent of a kitchen's cost. Here's how three common cabinet upgrades stack up in an average 10-by-10-foot kitchen. Repainting would cost less than \$200. Adding new drawers and doors runs about \$1,300, while upgrading to ready-to-assemble cabinets starts at about \$1,630.



The multisurface primer

A top coat of paint will probably flake free without a good primer beneath it. And while most DIYers are familiar with the primer used on walls, that's not the best option on cabinets. **"Wall primer is designed to fill the pores in drywall, allowing the paint to form a mechanical bond,"** says Rich O'Neil, president of Masterwork Painting in Woburn, MA. **"Cabinets won't have pores, so use a primer that grips chemically."** These special coatings, called bonding primers, hold like glue to nearly any cabinet finish, from the varnishes that cover many painted and stained cabinets to the vinyl on Thermofoil and plastic-covered melamine. *Shown: UMA, \$55; rustoleum.com*

Prep timeline

Creating a finish durable enough to withstand the heat, oil, and dings in a kitchen requires some care. Before popping the top on a can of paint, follow these steps to ready the surfaces.



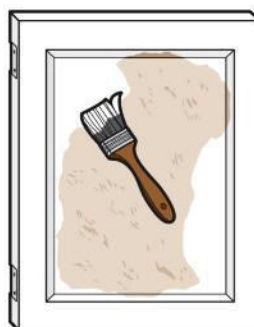
Clean

- Spray a degreaser, such as Spray Nine, onto a cloth or abrasive kitchen scrub sponge and wipe all the cabinet surfaces to remove any oil—critical for the primer to stick.
- Clean all six surfaces of each drawer or cabinet door as well as the face frames and exposed sides of the boxes.
- Pay particular attention to the cabinets around the cooktop and hood, which are often coated with grease.



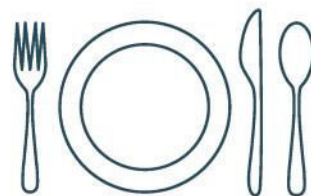
Sand

- Use a palm sander fitted with 100-grit sandpaper to remove the finish from cabinet doors, drawers, and boxes.
- Next, hand-sand the molding contours and the areas where those details meet the panel. You know you've removed the finish once the sheen is gone.
- Then use a dry paintbrush or a wet/dry vac to remove the dust before wiping the surfaces with a tack cloth.



Prime

- Use a 2½- or 3-inch-wide angled sash brush to apply primer to the cabinet door.
- Start in the seam where the panel meets the molding along all four sides. Then move to cover the rest of the panel before focusing on the stiles and rails that make up the door's frame.
- Check out the jig on the next page ("DIY Paint Station"); it will make the painting-and-drying process easier.



FAMILY MATTERS

Painting your cabinets means taking a vital room completely off-line. Plan ahead: Set up a kitchen in a nearby room with a hot plate, a toaster oven, and a cooler to serve as a fridge during the project. Oh, and use paper plates.

Tools and materials

The right brush and high-quality paint go a long way toward adding a factory-like finish that will wow for years



PAINT

Look for a paint designed for trim, often labeled enamel. The higher the sheen, the more durable the finish—high gloss will stand up better than satin.

ROLLER

Use a 4- or 6-inch foam roller to cover the sides of cabinets and their face frames.



SQUARE BRUSH

The straight end of a 3- to 4-inch-wide brush makes short work of large, flat panels.

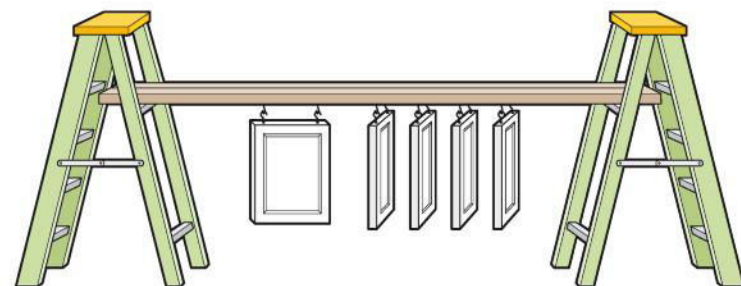


ANGLED BRUSH

A synthetic angled brush in the 2½- or 3-inch-wide range helps you get paint into corners of doors with molding, and can coat door frames in one pass.

HVLP SPRAYER

Not into the hand-brushed look? Spraying on a top coat is the easiest way to get a smooth, factory-like finish. High volume/low pressure sprayers are versatile enough to spray cabinets, fence panels, or exterior trim.



DIY PAINT STATION

This makeshift jig provides access to all sides of a cabinet door to reduce downtime during drying. Span a pair of 2×4s at eye level between two ladders. Screw eye hooks into one end of a 2×4, where doors will be painted, and at the other end, screw hooks into both 2×4s to hang painted doors from. Add corresponding hooks to the top edges of upper cabinet doors and the bottoms of lower doors and drawers, where the holes left behind won't be visible.

TOUGHEN UP

Latex paint is easy to work with and clean up, but on abuse-prone cabinets it could use some added muscle. Mix this additive with water-based paint (32 ounces treats 2 gallons of paint), and the ceramic beads

inside bind to the resins in the paint. The result is a water-based paint that protects like an oil-based coating, with improved hardness that resists dings, scratches, and chips.



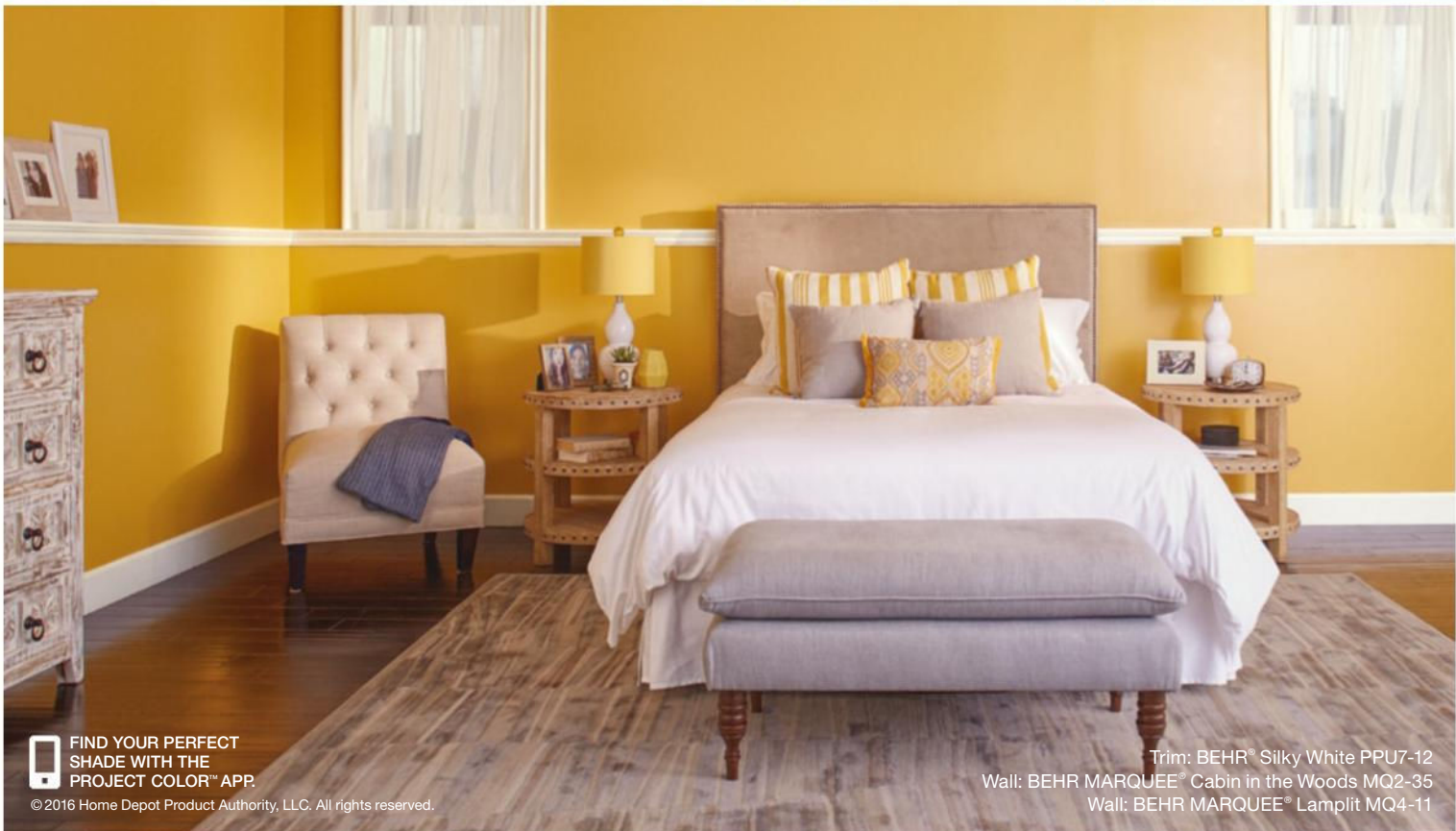
Shown: Hard Coat, \$15; latexagent.com



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Adding that last bit of detail is as easy as screwing on new hardware



COLONIAL REVIVAL Drawer pull with octagonal trim in brass, \$7; restoration.com

COLONIAL
Ringed cabinet knob in polished nickel, \$9; rejuvenation.com



CRAFTSMAN Horizontal pull and backplate in black, \$7; libertyhardware.com

FARMHOUSE
Antique-brass cabinet latch, \$15; houseofantiquehardware.com



TUDOR Door pull with black powder-coated finish, \$33; houseofantiquehardware.com



COLOR PLAY

Choosing a new cabinet color is a big commitment. Here are four ways to put your next kitchen color to work



MATCHING DUO Set against white countertops and a backsplash, these blue-green cabinets have an aged, hand-brushed look. The color is a calm background note to the shiny brass cabinet hardware.



TOP TO BOTTOM An easy way to unify the look of a kitchen is to use one color for cabinets and trim. Here, the same cheery yellow on the base cabinets extends up the wall to the casings and crown, contrasting with darker windows.



FRESH FACE Short on time? You can make a dramatic impact by changing the color on a few doors and drawer fronts. Choose cabinets that are grouped together, as seen here, to avoid a polka-dot effect.



INSTANT AGE Kitchens in older homes, evolving over time, often have mixed hues. Evoke that vintage feel by introducing a contrasting color, like the gray-blue seen on this island, which also has feet that give it the look of furniture. ■

PHOTOS: (CLOCKWISE FROM TOP CENTER) MICHAEL J. LEE; MCKINNEY PHOTOGRAPHY; DOUGLAS GIBB/GAP INTERIORS; JOHN GRUEN



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Q How do I clean up a nice, high-quality brush with dried latex paint on it?

—JENNIFER PIERCE, KNOXVILLE, TN

A Latex paint takes about a week to cure, so if it's not too late, try this home remedy: Soak the bristles for a few hours in a dish soap like Dawn. Once the paint softens, gently tease it out with a brush comb, and scrub out any remaining particles with a Scotch-Brite scouring pad. Rinse and repeat until the bristles are clean. But if that doesn't work, a stronger cleaner, like Krud Kutter's solvent-free Brush-Wash (rustoleum.com), may save you from having to buy a new brush. —THE EDITORS

PHOTOGRAPH BY TED MORRISON

57

tips, tricks, and answers to your home-improvement questions

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of veteran
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General Contractor



NORM ABRAM
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RICHARD TRETHEWEY
Plumbing and Heating
Expert



ROGER COOK
Landscape Contractor



KEVIN O'CONNOR
Host

Q Is it okay to transplant a shrub in the fall? I'm worried that the shock of being moved will hurt its chances of surviving our frigid winters.

—DEB MADIGAN, GREEN BAY, WI



ROGER COOK REPLIES: Fall is a great time to transplant shrubs. The days and nights are cooler, so the soil doesn't dry out as fast as it does in the summer. The air temperature may be chilly, but the ground is still warm, which encourages root growth late in the season. I also find it much more comfortable to do all the necessary digging and lifting when the weather isn't so hot and sticky.

Whenever you relocate a plant, the goal is to minimize the shock of the move by keeping as many roots intact as possible. Here are the rules I follow to ensure a successful transplant.

First, you need to define the root ball diameter. To do that, multiply the trunk diameter by 10. For example, a shrub with a 2-inch trunk should have a 20-inch root ball. Stretch a loop of string equal to the radius of the root ball around the trunk, and use a stick

Roger Cook spreads a layer of mulch around the base of a newly planted red twig dogwood. He keeps the mulch 3 inches away from the trunk to discourage the growth of girdling roots.

at the other end to mark the perimeter of the ball. Use a spade to slice through the roots vertically along the circle. Turn the spade backward; that makes it easier to keep the blade straight up and down.

Once you've severed the roots, dig a trench about a foot wide and 12 to 18 inches deep outside the perimeter, then work under the ball until it's free of the surrounding soil. Take care not to rock the plant or otherwise disturb the roots in the process.

Now, in the shrub's new location, excavate a straight-sided hole twice the diameter of the ball and 2 inches shallower than its depth. You want the top of the root ball a bit higher than the surrounding grade so that the roots aren't buried too deep.

If the ball isn't too big and unwieldy, you might be able to slip a tarp under it and drag the shrub to its new spot. Otherwise, wrap the ball tightly in burlap and twine and carry it to the hole in a hand cart or wheelbarrow. Fill around the ball up to grade, then water thoroughly and cover with 2 inches of mulch. Don't stamp on the backfill; roots can't grow well in compacted soil.

Water your shrub regularly until the first frost. The better it's hydrated before winter, the better its chances of getting off to a good start come spring.

Q Noisy pipes

We have a problem with pipes banging whenever I run the dishwasher. The plumber installed what he called an arrestor, but it's just a short,



What is it?

- A String-line reel
- B Ladder offset
- C Outfeed roller
- D Grout-sponge cleaner

FOR THE ANSWER, SEE PAGE 62

capped pipe that sticks up from one of the horizontal pipes. It doesn't seem to help. Is there a way to stop the banging?

—GLORIA LONG, MERCER, PA

RICHARD TRETHERWEY REPLIES: You have a classic case of water hammer, which happens when a valve, like the one in your dishwasher, quickly shuts down water flow. That sudden stoppage temporarily causes a big local spike in water pressure, which then dissipates throughout the plumbing system, resulting in loud thunks and rattles as it shakes loose pipes. Besides being annoying, all that shaking and banging is not a good thing for the joints or the fittings.

Plumbers used to—and apparently still do—make their own water-hammer arrestors in the field by attaching a short, capped pipe to an upright T-fitting on the offending pipe, just as your plumber did. The idea was to capture a slug of air that would cushion the shock when the

valve is shut. It actually works—for a while—but eventually the capped pipe fills with water and no longer absorbs the shocks.

Here's a better solution: Install a water-hammer arrestor with an internal diaphragm that keeps the water and air in separate chambers. The compact Mini-Trol arrestor (amtrol.com) works well for most residential applications.

Have your plumber install one as close as possible to the source of the hammering—the hot-water line to your dishwasher. Then have him secure any pipes that the hammering may have loosened. That simple fix should restore peace and quiet to your plumbing system.

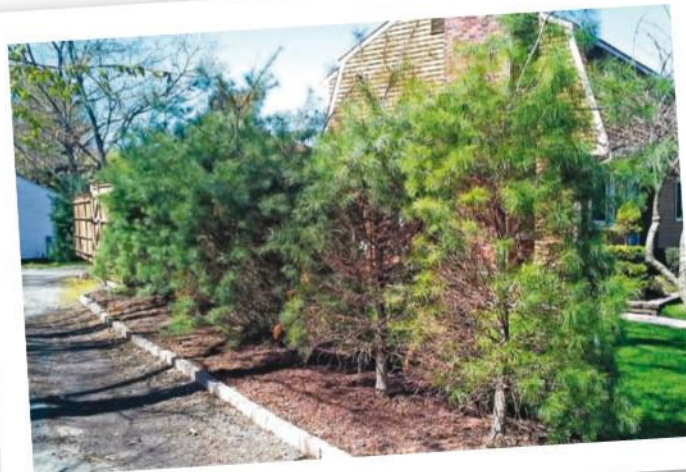
Q Dying pines

Several years ago, we had white pines planted along the driveway to screen it off from the house. Now, on the driveway side, six of the trees are brown and dying. Can you explain why this is happening?

—MELISSA ONOFRIO, MERIDEN, CT

ROGER COOK REPLIES: Judging from the photos you sent, the main problem with your trees is insufficient sunlight, due to the

These white pines are losing their needles because they aren't getting enough sunlight.



mature trees shading your driveway. Like most conifers, white pines don't grow well in shade, and when they are shaded they respond by shedding needles. The fact that the tops of your trees are leaning away from the driveway and toward the brightest part of the sky clearly indicates that they're sunlight deprived.

But that's not the only thing wrong with your hedge. Even if the trees had been getting enough sun, they were planted much too close together and too close to the driveway. White pines should be planted about 16 feet apart and at least that far from a driveway so that they don't shade one another or rub up against passing vehicles.

My suggestion for your shady, constricted space? Put up a fence.

What is it?

D Grout-sponge cleaner
The Wringmaster keeps your hands dry as its rollers squeeze water and grout particles out of the handled sponge included in the kit. This device fits on the rim of a 5-gallon bucket, which collects the grout residue as the sponge is squeezed dry. \$52; primo-tools.com



Q Stop mulch from washing away

We've had more than the usual amount of rain this year, and all the mulch has been washed out of our garden, which has a slight slope. Is there something I can put on the mulch to keep it in place?

—LYNN STEFANO, ARNOLD, MO

JENNIFER NAWADA REPLIES: I don't know of any such product. But you can reduce the chance of another mulch slide by capturing and redirecting—or at least slowing down—the flow of surface water where it's most concentrated. For instance, if the water is coming out of a downspout, then connect it to a dry well, which collects the runoff

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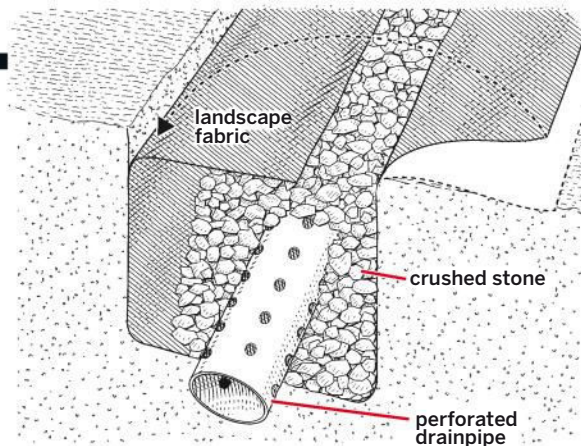


and lets it percolate into the ground.

If the water isn't coming from a point source, then catch it with a curtain drain, like the one shown here. Dig a trench perpendicular to the slope about 18 inches deep, line it with 6-foot-wide landscape fabric, and fill it halfway with crushed stone. Place a perforated 4-inch drainpipe on the stone; pitch it at $\frac{1}{8}$ inch per foot. That's half the standard $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch-per-foot pitch for drains because you want water to drain away slowly. Orient the holes to face up the slope.

Cover the pipe with more crushed stone, then swaddle it

Jennifer Nawada owns Nawada Landscape Design in Boston. She appears regularly on TV episodes of Ask This Old House.



CURTAIN DRAIN
Use it to capture and carry away water that flows along the surface. Its close cousin, the French drain, handles sub-surface water.

with the unburied landscape fabric, which prevents soil particles from clogging the pipe and the stone. Finally, add enough soil to hide the fabric, and leave a shallow swale to slow and divert the water so that it won't undermine the mulch again.

Q How to repaint aluminum siding
I'm getting ready to have my 25-year-old aluminum siding

repainted. What should be done to get a good, long-lasting job?

—ANNA RODILOSO, BERLIN, NJ

KEVIN O'CONNOR REPLIES: I asked painting contractor Rich O'Neil, owner of Masterwork Painting, what he would do. Here's what he had to say about your siding.

"The prep work for factory-finished aluminum siding isn't that different from what has to be done for painted wood siding, except for one step: There's no need for a lead test. Lead was banned from residential paints in 1978, long before your siding was installed.

"So the first step is to clean off the dirt, mildew, and chalky, deteriorated pigments that interfere with adhesion. Wet down and cover the foundation plants with plastic

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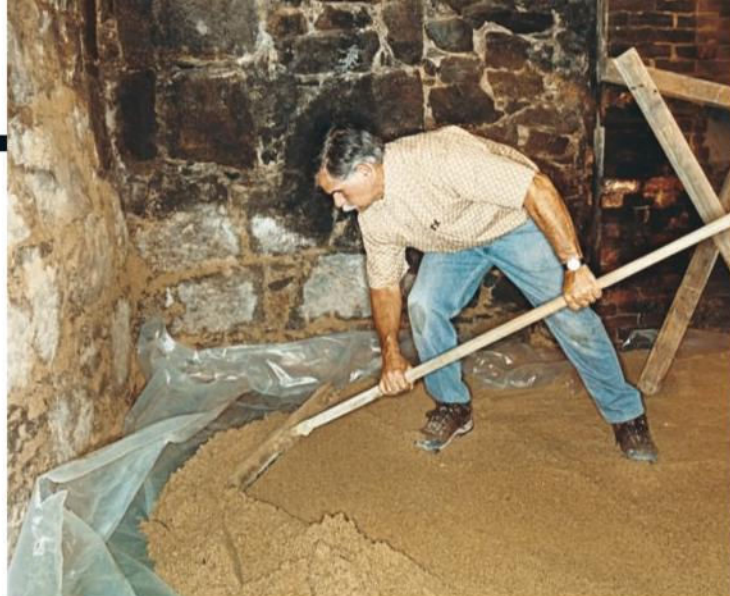


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Before pouring concrete over a dirt floor in a basement, Tom Silva lays down a plastic vapor barrier and covers it with sand to protect it from punctures.



sheeting, then scrub the siding with a scouring pad and a mold-killing house cleaner like Jomax (rustoleum.com) mixed with water and bleach. Work from the bottom up, and make sure to rinse the cleaned areas thoroughly before they dry.

“You can speed up the cleaning process by using a pressure-washer with a wide fan tip to spray on the bleach-and-house-cleaner solution. Just make sure to always hold the spray wand at about a 45-degree angle to the surface, with the wand nozzle below the handle. If you don’t follow those precautions, the high-pressure spray can dent the metal and force water up behind the siding. It can also break glass, so take extra care around windows.

“Once the siding is rinsed and dry, apply a coat of acrylic exterior primer followed by two top coats of 100 percent acrylic exterior paint.”

Q **Musty basement**

The basement of our 1917 house is finished, except where there’s an enclosed storage area with a dirt floor and an exposed foundation wall. The area is very damp and makes the entire basement smell musty. How do we fix this problem without losing the storage space?

—KATHRYN ROCHE, INDIANAPOLIS

TOM SILVA REPLIES: A dirt floor in a basement dumps massive amounts of moisture into a house, and encourages the mold that causes musty smells. Your best

bet for keeping the humidity down is to cap the dirt with a poured concrete slab at least 3 inches thick; 4 is better.

But concrete by itself won’t stop water vapor from migrating through the slab. To do that, you need a vapor barrier—a sheet of 5-mil plastic—placed over the dirt before the pour. Along the perimeter, run the sheet a few inches up the foundation and the existing slab. And if it takes more than one sheet, overlap the edges by at least 18 inches. Next, cover the plastic with a 1-inch-thick layer of sand. It provides an absorbent surface that allows the wet concrete to be more workable, and creates a cushion to keep the plastic from being punctured.

While the new slab will stop a big source of humid air, your storage room will probably still be damp in the summer. Running a fan and a dehumidifier in that room will help keep the moisture in check. Set the dehumidifier to turn on when the relative humidity goes above 50 percent; that’s too dry for mold to grow but not so dry that your dehumidifier runs all the time.

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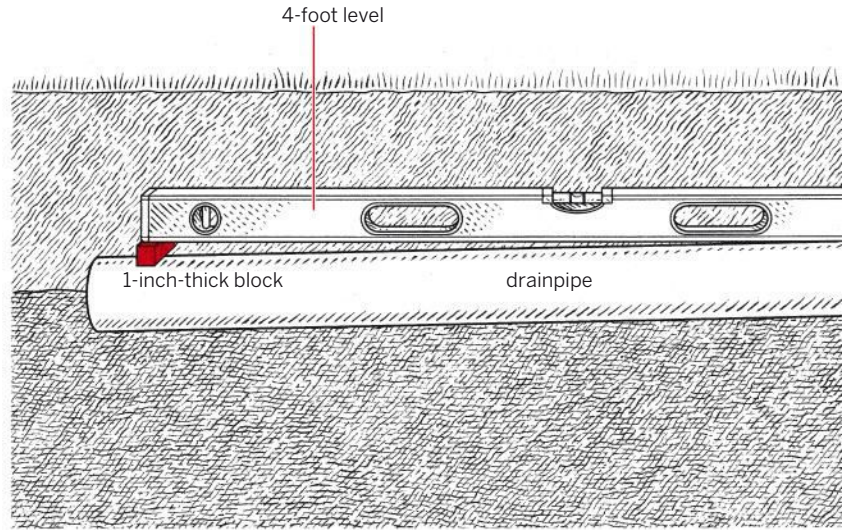


Norm's tricks of the trade

I have to connect my downspout to a dry well. How much should I pitch the pipe that leads to the dry well?

—ARCHIBALD SMART, WASHINGTON, D.C.

A The standard pitch for most things that depend on gravity to shed water—drainpipes, patios, porch decks, and gutters, to name a few—is $\frac{1}{4}$ inch per foot. And here's a trick that makes it easy to determine whether something has that pitch. Hot-glue a narrow 1-inch block to one end of a 4-foot level. Then simply place the block on the lower end of the slope and adjust things until the bubble reads level. The surface that the level is resting on will be at the proper pitch. ■



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SEPTEMBER

What a bore life would be if we lived it in black and white. Behind these doors, a wide world of luscious color awaits. Come on in.

RIGHT: A lattice fence and an arch above the front gate boost the home's curb appeal and create a bit of privacy for a house that sits right on the street. The gray shingles and white trim were chosen to suggest a New England sea captain's house. *Paint (siding): C2's Jailhouse Rock*

OPPOSITE: The original house had no entry vestibule—a detail the owners insisted on adding. Wainscot helps connect that space to the adjoining living room. *Paint (upper walls): C2's Gallery White. Wallpaper: Phillip Jeffries*



Shipshape

A 1903 cottage gets a neat-and-trim makeover inspired by its bayside location

Like many young couples, Alicia and Casey Leach, veterans of San Francisco's tech industry, traded an apartment for a house when it came time to start a family. They fell in love with a 1903 cottage in nearby Sausalito, captivated by its small-town charm and bay views. Lucky for them, the one-story house with an unfinished attic also came with plans for expansion that had already been

by **Joanne Furio**
photographs by **Ken Gutmaker**
produced by **Tisha Leung**
styling by **Rachel Riedy**





approved by the city. “It felt like it was supposed to be a one-bedroom house,” says Alicia, “but over its hundred years it had been remodeled into a two-bedroom.” Within three years of moving in, the couple had both a toddler and a newborn. “The house got really cramped,” she says.

The preapproved plans, by architect Whitney Schrauth, would allow the Leaches to convert the attic into living space, expanding the 1,092-square-foot house by 665 square feet, thanks to two shed dormers that would be added to achieve ceilings upstairs rising from 6½ feet to 9 feet. In a locale where bay views are cherished, the house’s 31-foot height would remain below the imposed 32-foot limit.

The plans also called for a massive master bedroom suite upstairs, which didn’t suit the Leaches, who wanted two bedrooms and two baths there. So Schrauth recommended architect Nori Whisenand to help the couple on an interior redesign that would address the needs of the young family.

While the plans allowed for an exterior renovation,

ABOVE: The kitchen was returned to its original location at the back of the house. Although the previous cook space included an island, the new galley is configured in an efficient U shape, with a La Cornue range as the focal point. Vent hood: Vent-A-Hood. Refrigerator: Sub-Zero. Rug: Summer House

RIGHT: Cabinets extend to the ceiling to maximize storage. The undermount farmhouse sink allows for wiping crumbs right off the counter and into the basin. Sink: Shaws Original. Faucet: Grohe





LEFT: Located at the back of the house, the sunroom, which also serves as a dining space, connects the family room to a deck. The room gets a lot of sun, so the homeowners chose a saturated blue to play off the maritime location. Planter boxes mounted on the wall help bring the outdoors inside. *Paint (walls): C2's Espionage. Table, benches: Heritage Salvage. Host chair: Anthropologie. Wall planters: Charlie Callahan*

they didn't include any curb-appeal enhancements. "The original structure looked like a simple story-book house that a kid would draw—a triangle on top of a square," says Whisenand. She proposed a beachy cottage style to connect the house more directly with its location near the water.

Having lived in the home for three years before renovating, the couple knew the drawbacks of the existing configuration. Sometime during the house's 113-year history the kitchen was moved to the front, and a long hallway divided the four rooms. "It didn't flow at all," says Alicia. "You had to go past the two bedrooms to get to the dining room." Because the approved plans did not apply to the first-floor interior, Whisenand had a clean slate for rejiggering the layout.

Alicia also asked for a fireplace and an entry hall, requiring additional visits to municipal offices. "We ended up redesigning the entire interior of the house," says Whisenand. To assist in the process, she brought in general contractor Russell Calhoon, and Detlev Doring, a structural engineer, a necessity in

Floor Plans

The 1,092-square-foot house gained half again as much space—665 square feet—when the attic was turned into two bedrooms and two baths.

FIRST FLOOR



SECOND FLOOR



scale
5'



this earthquake zone. Preparing for a down-to-the-studs renovation, the Leaches moved into a rental.

On the first floor, the reworked plans returned the kitchen to the back of the house, putting a guest bedroom in its former spot. The living room stayed put, as did the sunroom at the opposite end. Now the living room flows into the family room and the kitchen, then into the sunroom, which is now the dining room.

To add stylistic details that would reflect the period of the house, Whisenand pored over books, including William Radford's *Old House Measured and Scaled Detail Drawings: For Builders and Carpenters*. She found inspiration in the open room dividers common to bungalows of the early 1900s, and incorporated ceiling soffits and half-columned partition walls into her design. Upstairs, carving two bedrooms and two baths out of 665 square feet would require some ingenuity. Calhoon had to figure out how to get the waste line from the second-floor baths into the basement, where it had to connect to the main line before exiting the house. As he eyed plans for the first-floor redesign, he found the perfect spot: the cabinetry in the family room. There, a half column and a soffit above conveniently conceal the line. "The column

ABOVE: A wainscot-wrapped staircase just off the living room replaced the pull-down attic stair. It features a porthole-inspired window, where a small rectangular window had been, to capture natural light and reinforce the house's nautical design theme. Wallpaper: Phillip Jeffries

RIGHT: The Leach family at home—Alicia and Casey with their daughter, Hana, 9, and son, Wyatt, 8.





ABOVE: In the family room, the column above the built-in cabinet serves as both an architectural feature and a plumbing chase. Small windows placed high on the wall screen views from the street. Built-in cabinetry offers doors, drawers, and cubbies for a variety of storage options; large baskets corral toys while making them easy for kids to access. Baskets: Crate & Barrel

wasn't originally designed to hide plumbing, but it worked out beautifully," says Calhoon.

For a major space-saving strategy, Whisenand turned to the compact design of boats. Because the master bedroom would not be large enough to include dressers, she created floor-to-ceiling built-ins along a wall in the long and narrow master bath, which doubles as a dressing area, with a closet behind a pocket door at one end. Serendipitously, the cabinetry sits right above the washer and dryer, hidden in a closet, so Whisenand added a laundry chute.

With the layout problems resolved, another, larger one was discovered behind the walls as work got under way. Open walls revealed balloon framing, rather than conventional platform framing. This 19th-century technique creates a skeletal structure that runs the height of the house with one-piece vertical studs—in this case, Douglas fir, half of it rotted, and most of it out of plumb.

"From the outset, the plan was to save as much of the existing exterior structure as possible," says Calhoon—not out of budgetary concerns, but because the Leaches wanted to retain any original materials they could. But Calhoon's discovery led him

to recommend doing away with the old framing altogether. Alicia, however, was gripped by a sense of stewardship. "This is what has kept the house steady through earthquakes," she says. "I felt very secure with this original wood holding up the house." Calhoon and Doring were not so sure. Ultimately, they reached a compromise: Whatever timbers were not rotted would be kept and conventional frames placed inside them, even if that meant losing precious square footage. For added strength, the engineer required that the old Douglas fir frame be clipped to the new walls "so in an earthquake the old frame wouldn't fall off the house," Calhoon says. The foundation was altered to take the additional load and stabilized to meet seismic requirements.

With new, sturdier structural members in place, Alicia and Calhoon worked closely on finishes and materials for period authenticity. In the new bedrooms and baths upstairs, tongue-and-groove planks cover the ceilings in lieu of plain drywall; in the living room, crown molding and Craftsman-inspired built-ins add architectural interest.

When it came to the floors, Alicia wanted to retain the original Douglas fir, but there wasn't enough of



LEFT: In the all-white 15-by-11-foot master bedroom, tongue-and-groove planking covers the ceiling to add dimension in the small space. White linen drapes cover French doors that lead to a new deck above the dining room, which extends the bedroom's living space.



LEFT: The couple's two children, Hana and Wyatt, share a bunk room in the converted attic. The sloped ceiling is under one of the shed dormers added to the original structure to create headroom for the second floor. Paint (walls): C2's Green Tea

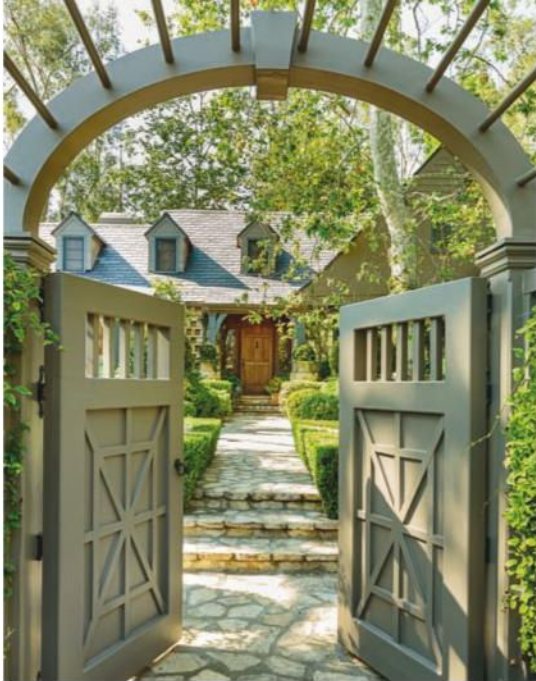
OPPOSITE: A wall of floor-to-ceiling cabinets in the master bath, inspired by a ship's stateroom, makes up for the lack of furniture in the master bedroom. Penny-round tile was used in all the baths as a low-cost way to add vintage-inspired detail. Skylights in the upstairs bedrooms and baths usher in natural light. Paint (upper walls): C2's Grand Banks. Sinks: Kohler

it in usable condition. She sought wood that felt good under bare feet. "I was more focused on the look," Casey says. At a salvaged-barn-wood dealer, the couple discovered hemlock from a New York barn that satisfied them both. "It really brings a lot of character to the home," Casey says.

To replicate the original beadboard wainscoting and moldings, Alicia likewise took pains to make the right choices. "We might have saved some money going the MDF route," she says. "But wood just felt right." What also felt right was the reclaimed heart pine the couple found at another salvage company—planks that had once been a factory floor. A hunk of it now tops the Leaches' dining room table.

The down-to-the-framing renovation wrapped in 10 months; the Leaches returned to their house with two months left on their rental. They discovered that the new floor plan and carefully selected materials combined to create a much more livable house. "The entry gives you a sense of transition from the outdoor space to the indoor space," says Alicia. "It's nice to be able to walk into a foyer, no matter how small it is." Now, if a family member craves privacy, he or she can get away upstairs—which couldn't be done before. "We squeezed every inch of space out of this house," Alicia says. "It still has the cozy feel of an old house, but it now makes much more sense." ■





green & serene

Sculptural shrubs, verdant groundcovers, and dappled sunlight create the magic in this water-thrifty landscape

By **Jeanne Huber** Photographs by **Mark Lohman**
Produced by **Tisha Leung** Styling by **Sunday Hendrickson**

Delve into the history of landscape design, and you see certain ideas over and over: strong geometric forms, energetic use of contrasting colors, a balance between managed and wild. There's good reason for the repetition—these ideas work.

Studying pictures of classic gardens while taking landscape-design courses at the University of California, Los Angeles, about 10 years ago, interior designer Janet Lohman found herself especially drawn to tidy, globe-shaped shrubs. She saw them in gardens in France, England, Italy, Spain, Portugal—all of Europe, it seemed, and dating back to medieval times. There were even references to their use at the beginning of the Roman Empire. “Some things are just right,” Janet concluded. “They stand the test of time.” She thought that globe shapes, with their strong structure, would look good almost anywhere:





Tall sycamore and eucalyptus trees block the heat of the summer sun but still leave the yard shimmering with light. The arch-topped entry gate (opposite) offers some privacy from the street and frames the approach to the house, which is paved with local flagstone.



2

ABOVE: Layered hedges of privet and boxwood set off by globe-shaped shrubs provide a structured framework in varying shades of green for the 1948 Tudor-style house.

modern gardens, traditional gardens, rustic gardens. And she had the perfect canvas for testing her theory—the 1948 Tudor-style house she shared with her photographer husband, Mark, in Los Angeles.

Back then, the front yard was just a blank lawn, fully exposed to the street. The only plants with any heft on the half-acre lot were two mature sycamores, one pepper tree, several eucalyptus, and a large camellia by the front door. The backyard held a kidney-shaped swimming pool. The west-facing side yard, with its lovely evening light and its view into the canyon below, had only a narrow concrete path hugging the house. Below that, the yard dropped off, too steep to use.

During their early years in the house, the couple added a deck cantilevered out over the hillside and a stone path from the street to the front door. Then, just as Janet was working to expand her design business into gardens, there was a pressing need to build at least a fence to separate the front lawn from the

street. Mark and Janet had twin boys, then toddlers, plus two Lab puppies. And they all loved to run.

Seizing the opportunity to experiment with some of her landscape-design ideas, Janet set about creating a plan that would enhance the look of the house, which has hefty timbers, a steep slate roof, and leaded-glass windows that remind her of an English country house. She wasn't interested in planting a traditional English cottage garden, however—too much dividing and deadheading, and besides, foliage colors and textures enchant her more than flowers do. The canyon by the house is blanketed in oaks, ceanothus shrubs, and other native plants. "These are the dry, scrubby hills of L.A.," Janet says. "When I look across the canyon, I see mostly gray-green, with the bright green of new growth."

Inspired by that color palette, but wanting a more structured look, she dug into the perimeter of the lawn and planted privet around the edges, then boxwood inside that, and added westringia and other



LEFT: A bench at the back of the side yard, near the pool and just beyond the entertaining deck, offers a quiet spot for looking out over the canyon below.

BOTTOM: The revamped main deck holds a comfortable lounge area with seating for eight. The finial-topped posts that secure the deck's railing complement the structured look of the sheared hedges and mounding shrubs in the landscape.



the garden plan

The property includes a formal front garden, a large deck for entertaining that looks out over the canyon, another smaller deck, a hillside garden and a pool in back, as well as a new gravel garden behind the garage.



GARDEN PLAN: IAN WOPPOLE



tough, drought-tolerant shrubs. She also put in several maples, sword ferns, and hardy geranium groundcovers with pink, purple, and magenta blossoms so tiny they almost get lost in the foliage. Janet added only a few plants with showy flowers: ‘Iceberg’ roses, ‘Richmondensis’ begonias, and ‘Alaska’ azaleas, all with white blooms. Gradually the lawn grew smaller as the beds expanded with plants that caught Janet’s eye, mostly easy-care shrubs that grow naturally in dense mounds, such as ‘Golf Ball’ kohuhu.

Last summer, when a record drought triggered water rationing, the lawn’s time was finally up. Janet took it out and installed a gravel mix in shades of yellow, gray, and brown that blend into a medium gray that mimics the color of the mortar in the flagstone front path. Overhead tower drought-hardy sycamore and eucalyptus trees, which block the worst of the heat and leave the garden dappled in sunlight, creating a dreamy, relaxed feeling.

On the west side of the house, the gravel becomes a path leading to a small deck entered through a double arch. It’s just big enough for a couple of people to sit and talk or read. “It was the ugliest part of the yard,” Mark says. “Now it’s the cutest spot.”

ABOVE: In addition to the large deck used for entertaining, the couple added a smaller, hidden deck. It’s a perfect place to read a book or visit with a friend or two. Containers soften the wood structure with succulents and nandina, a shrub with finely textured leaves in orange and red.

OPPOSITE: Two romantic iron arches found in a Ballard Designs catalog mark the entrance to the hidden deck and frame the view of the canyon. They also form a sturdy trellis for ‘Iceberg’ climbing roses.

Beyond that is the 34-foot-long main deck, which guests generally access from inside the house. The Lohmans rebuilt it a few years ago, adding 6 feet to the original 16-foot depth. Like the old deck, it has horizontal supports anchored to the home’s foundation and vertical supports of reinforced concrete sunk into the hillside.

Over time, the backyard gained a lot of usable space. By excavating for a 95-foot-long retaining wall, the Lohmans pushed the hillside back about 10 feet around the pool, creating a level area in which to plant. Janet added 30 trees, many of them there. She also created a seating area shaded by birches, where one can look out over the canyon, breathe in the scent of lavender, and listen to the hum of bees. The most recent change solved a drainage problem that plagued a flagstone patio behind the garage and turned that area from a catchall for old barbecues, ladders, and bags of potting soil into a gravel garden lined with water-thrifty plants.

Mark had wanted a yard that made it easy to entertain; Janet “one that felt enclosed and private, one that felt safe and secluded and lush.” Now, it’s abundantly clear, they have both gotten their wish. ■



6

true COLORS



An interior decorator channels the past of her 1930s house—and comes up with its **meant-to-be paint scheme**

By Deborah Baldwin Photographs by Gridley + Graves
Produced by Tisha Leung Styling by Brian Carter

ABOVE: A palette inspired by the fieldstone facade reinforces the cottage style of the house and its new portico. Paint: Sherwin-Williams's Cocoon (columns and clapboards); Benjamin Moore's Bittersweet Chocolate (trim) and Cottage Red (door). Siding: LP Building Products
RIGHT: A historic shade of green connects the dining room wainscot and trim to the ceiling—and adjacent rooms. Paint: Benjamin Moore's Prescott Green (wainscot, trim, and ceiling) and Weston Flax (upper walls); Annie Sloan Chalk Paint's Provence (sideboard). Rug: RugsUSA







After rejecting trendy whites and grays as “just not right,” Kristie Barnett chose a more historically correct palette for her family’s 1939 house, in Nashville. “To be honest,” she says of one shade in particular, “it is a little ’30s hospital green.”

It takes courage to talk about your favorite color that way—and the kind of confidence that comes from knowing what you’re doing. Most people, after all, would rather whitewash every room than risk painting a living space anything remotely medicinal.

But guess what? It works. There goes Kristie’s green, drawn from the home’s original Depression-era bath tile, climbing up the dining room wainscot onto the window trim before coming to rest on the ceiling (the ceiling!). It then sallies forth into the living room and keeps going until it reaches the trim in Kristie’s home office, where it is joined by a wall color that is called, no kidding, Steamed Spinach.

Most days, you’ll find Kristie here, where she consults as a palette tamer, an interior decorator, and a “psychological stager” (more about this shortly).

While her blog, *The Decorologist*, provides

ABOVE: The living room opens onto a screened-porch-turned-sunroom. Teal trim on a vintage chair punches up a palette of pale neutrals. Paint: *Benjamin Moore’s Prescott Green (walls) and White Dove (trim, ceiling, and coffee table); Annie Sloan Chalk Paint’s Provence (armchair frame) and Pure (armchair fabric). Sofa:* *Bernhardt. Garden stool, lamps, and end table:* *HomeGoods*

examples of her work, few projects better distill Kristie’s approach than her own home, an ongoing experiment that involves repeated tinkering with the furniture, light fixtures, rugs, and accessories—to the surprise if not always the delight of her husband, Phil, a corporate events producer when he isn’t DIY-ing something himself. “Did you move the light switch?” he drawled once upon returning home from a business trip. “Because I can’t find it.”

The two share a love of fixing up old houses and old things. Picture an armoire that once stood in an uncle’s gift shop, spiffed up to serve as a closet for the master bedroom.

When Kristie isn’t enhancing heirlooms, assisting clients, or training fellow designers, she haunts estate sales, eBay, and the mega outlet chain HomeGoods, whose unpredictable inventory plays to her strength as a professional picker.

That edge can cut both ways, as it did when the couple set eyes on their house for the first time.

“When my father-in-law said, ‘I found a house you’d love,’ I told him, ‘We’re not interested!’ We had just finished renovating a house. We had a baby....”

Some reluctant home buyers cave at the sight of



nodding hydrangeas and a crooked stone path, others under the heady influence of a gleaming six-burner range. For Kristie, it was more about stepping inside and back in time.

Tucked into a pleasant sprawl of 1960s ranch houses, the five-bedroom, two-bath house—about 2,700 square feet on two floors—felt like a genuine period piece. Completed in 1940, it even had a fun origin story, as the couple would later learn: The first owner was the man behind a still legendary delicacy, Vietti Chili, and is said to have cooked up his secret recipe right there in the kitchen.

Naturally, there were things that needed fixing. The couple harnessed their self-taught skills and set to work. “The day before we moved in, we stayed up all night replacing the kitchen floor,” recalls Kristie, who couldn’t wait to cover over its 1980s beige vinyl. The urgent need for fresh paint on the walls went without saying.

Let your color go with the flow

Kristie leans toward historic colors because she finds them warmer and, as she puts it, more interesting than the crisper whites and grays that are so popular

ABOVE LEFT: The kitchen's worn laminate counters were updated with mahogany veneer, stained, then sealed with self-leveling epoxy. New copper-toned sink fittings and hardware nod to the existing backsplash. The range is black, allowing it to stand out in the mainly white scheme. Range and dishwasher: GE. Faucet: Phister. Vinyl floor tile: Corlew and Perry

ABOVE RIGHT: Phil and Kristie Barnett, with daughters Audrey, 16, and Kelta, 12, gather in the sunroom. The rug and armchairs were snagged at estate sales. Windows: Monarch Windows and Doors. Garden stool: HomeGoods

now. To lend cohesiveness to the smaller rooms in older houses, she likes to start with one shade—a “main neutral”—and weave it throughout. Total monotone would be boring, while too many random colors and you risk, as she says characteristically, “getting on the crazy train.”

She applies her favored shade in different spots—on the walls in one room, on the trim in another. “It unites them but allows each to have its own personality,” she says.

Visual flow isn’t her only goal. When the background stays the same, she can move furniture and accessories around, “which I do quite frequently!”

That’s particularly true on the first floor, the main focus during the early stages of the renovation. The couple had no desire to alter the footprint but they did look for ways to tap more useful space, over time carving out a breakfast nook and turning a screened porch into a sunroom. They moved slowly, which is how Kristie likes it, suggesting it takes time to suss out what works not only for you but also for the house.

Just last year, with two growing daughters, the couple demolished two walls upstairs that didn’t





appear to be original, turning a bedroom into a common area between the girls' rooms. After years of scratching their heads over the upstairs bath—a dysfunctional space crammed under the eaves—they rebuilt it from scratch. Subway tile gives the new bath period appeal, while emerald-green walls and black trim give it a contemporary edge.

You need to see colors in context

To help clients narrow their paint choices, Kristie travels with two huge bags full of oversize swatches. As part of the winnowing exercise, she holds them up against finishes that can't be easily changed, like granite countertops or the tile around a fireplace. "It helps you see the undertones; if the granite has a little green in it," she says, "I suggest testing a neutral with a little green in it."

Homeowners often underestimate the impact of wood's undertones, she notes. "When it goes up vertically, like a stair rail or trim, it acts like a color. For example, if it's orangey, gray next to it would look like sludge."

Context aside, Kristie is a firm believer in following one's gut reaction to a specific color. It goes back

OPPOSITE: Soft lavender and crisp white bring out the warmth in the master bedroom's oak flooring and heirloom bed. *Paint: Benjamin Moore's Violet Mist (walls and ceiling) and White Dove (trim). Bench: Marshalls*

ABOVE LEFT: In Kristie's home office, vivid emerald and jade complement reddish unpainted wood. Phil made the open shelves; the dresser is a reinvented vintage piece. *Paint: Benjamin Moore's Steamed Spinach (walls) and Prescott Green (trim and ceiling)*

ABOVE RIGHT: The new upstairs bath has luxury touches like marble floor tile and a gold-finished faucet. *Paint: Benjamin Moore's Steamed Spinach (walls) and Black (window). Faucet: Newport Brass. Mirror: HomeGoods*



to her training, which includes a master's degree in psychology. She is so tuned in to what makes people feel comfortable that she has written a book for pros called *Psychological Staging*, nailing what buyers really want—a home that "represents a fresh, clean start for their chaotic lives" and "hints at a lifestyle they would like to have," as she accurately notes.

That background comes in handy when she has to help homeowners navigate in emotionally charged seas like a paint store. "Most designers start with a piece of furniture, or maybe the rug, and use that to create a palette," she says. "But I do the opposite—because if you don't like the wall color, you won't like the room."

Her one exception to the bow-to-your-real-feelings rule? Clients under the age of 18.

Kids require a little guidance

"Never let children pick out their own paint colors," says Kristie. Instead, "show them certain palettes and ask them which they prefer." By that she mainly means palettes drawn from the less-saturated choices at the back of her favorite fan decks. Sure, you can always repaint, but generally you want



something that will work for them as they grow—and won't set your teeth on edge in the meantime.

For one young client with a crush on the royal garb of a certain Disney princess, "I said, 'Let's do a European princess,'" Kristie recalls. So: less purple, more lavender, like the serene shade in her own bedroom.

Kristie may still enjoy moving things around, but basically her family's forever house is done. "I like that it is very special but doesn't intimidate people; they think it's cool and sweet," she says. She credits its cottage charm to rooms that aren't big, "yet keep going."

Speaking of that flow-enabling green, years into the renovation the couple dug into a living room wall and found traces of an almost identical green under layers of paint going back to 1940. "I was so excited, I was jumping up and down," Kristie says.

Same thing when Phil was making kitchen improvements and unearthed the original green and black linoleum tile. "I was like, 'Thank you, house!'" says Kristie.

"I love this house, and I feel like over the years it's revealed different things to me—like I was on the right track all along." 🏡

ABOVE: A wall came down to create this cozy second-floor space. Wrapping it in a single light-reflecting color added loft to the 8-foot ceiling. Paint: Benjamin Moore's Hawthorne Yellow (walls and ceiling) and Black (window); Annie Sloan Chalk Paint's Napoleonic Blue (sofa trim)

RIGHT and OPPOSITE: Two shades of blue enliven daughter Kelta's bedroom. Phil made the built-ins and created the floor pattern, using a compass and string, painter's tape, and wood stains. Paint: Benjamin Moore's Azure Water (door, built-ins, and trim) and Palladian Blue (walls and ceiling). Stain: Minwax. Chairs and pillows: Overstock





paint by numbers

Perplexed by palettes? Fan decks got you flummoxed? Choosing color schemes to refresh your rooms needn't be daunting. Consider the **no-fail, four-color combos** we've gathered here—from muted pastels to bold brights, they're sure to turn any space into a work of art **BY MICHELLE BRUNNER**



CLAY PINK

This earthy pink is a surprisingly versatile neutral. Here it provides a playful base on kitchen walls, setting off the room's architectural details and tempering their formality. A contrasting dark gray on the island grounds the room and helps make everything around it feel bigger and lighter.

Farrow & Ball 1. *Dead Salmon* (walls),
2. *Dimity* (trim), 3. *Pointing* (floor),
4. *Railings* (accent)

OR TRY THIS: Pale pink also works well with dark brown and other warm neutrals to create a cozy, inviting color scheme.



WALLS
Harmony
Valspar

TRIM
Swiss Coffee
Valspar

CEILING
Santa Fe Spirit
Valspar

ACCENT
Labrador
Valspar





LEAF GREEN

Using a bold, midtone green in a hallway or entry—a “peekaboo” room you see only at a glance—is a great way to incorporate a high-impact hue in your home. Here, a richer, more saturated green makes a statement on the door and its trim. Contrasting white and black round out this lush, energizing palette.

Sherwin-Williams

1. Garden Spot (walls),
2. Arugula (accent), 3. Extra White (ceiling, trim),
4. Caviar (accent)

OR TRY THIS:

Pair this vegetal green with similarly intense yellow and blue hues for a vibrant yet harmonious palette of related shades.



WALLS

Grassy Meadow
Olympic

TRIM

Queen Anne's Lace
Olympic



ACCENT

Spiced Butternut
Olympic

ACCENT

Rave Regatta
Olympic





WARM GRAY

Grays are versatile, but can look sober and serious. Not so here. A wide band of pale taupe gray creates an expansive feeling, while a darker hue at wainscot height grounds the room. A high-energy accent like coral injects a note of fun and draws the eye upward when used as a border around the room. Warm citron on the curtains provides a punchy accent.

Behr 1. Penthouse View (upper walls), 2. Fifth Olive-Nue (lower walls, baseboard), 3. Coralette (accent), 4. Citronne (accent)

OR TRY THIS: This gray's brown undertone pairs well with a darker taupe gray and a steely navy, accented with a pop of terra-cotta.



WALLS
Sutton Place
Grey
Glidden



CEILING
Song Sparrow
Glidden



ACCENT
Canyon Stone
Glidden



TRIM/ACCENT
Approaching Storm
Glidden



AQUA BLUE

Blues and greens are a foolproof combo because they neighbor each other on the color wheel. Using pale aqua as the dominant color in this dining space makes it easy to layer in bolder colors, such as the deep teal on the door and trim, plus the bright green incorporated in the floor. Lime accents pick up the gold tones in the room.

Behr 1. *Polished Aqua* (walls), 2. *Wanderlust* (doors and trim), 3. *Jade Dragon* (accent), 4. *That's My Lime* (accent)

OR TRY THIS: Aqua can look either blue or green, much like water itself. Another can't-miss approach: Pair it with rich neutrals in cool gray-brown tones.



WALLS
Misty Aqua
Olympic

TRIM
Silver Feather
Olympic



FLOOR
Talavera
Olympic

ACCENT
Phantom Mist
Olympic





YELLOW GOLD

Cheery and bright, this is also a challenge to get right, since the color can intensify on the wall. Limiting the sunshine-inspired shade to just an accent wall and windows, as shown here, keeps it from overwhelming, as does grounding it with sophisticated neutrals like warm white, ebony brown, and taupe gray.

Sherwin-Williams 1. *Rayo de Sol* (wall, window), 2. *Alabaster* (walls, ceiling), 3. *Black Fox* (floor), 4. *Keystone Gray* (accent)

OR TRY THIS: For a modern-farmhouse feel, balance bright-yellow walls with weathered neutrals and muted-blue accents. 🏡



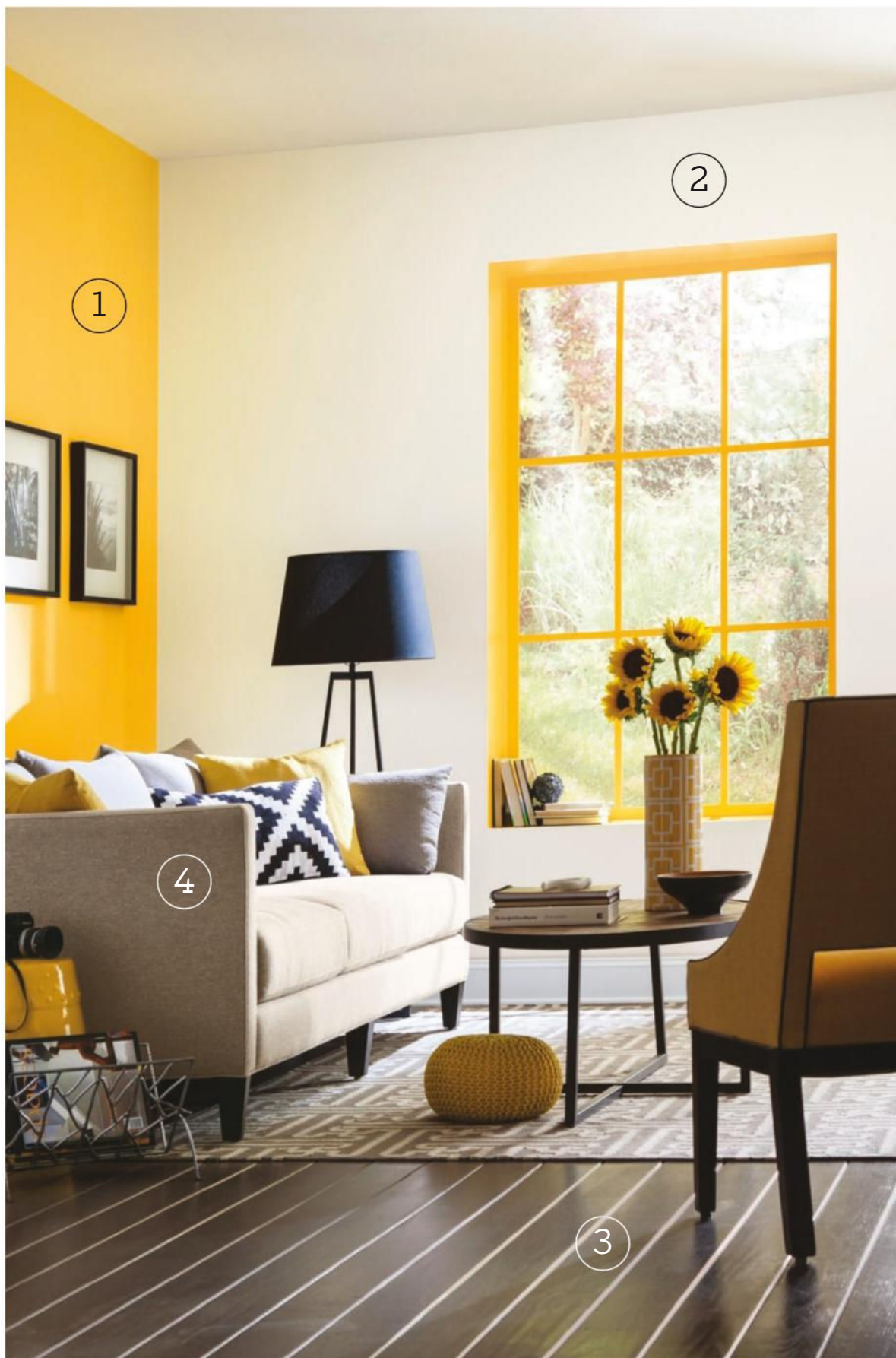
WALLS
Summer Wheat
Valspar

CEILING
Frappé
Valspar



TRIM
Dove White
Valspar

ACCENT
Summerhouse Blue
Valspar





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PROJECT OF THE WEEK

HOW TO BUILD A TOOL BENCH



Photo: Allison Dinner

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For step-by-step instructions, go to thisoldhouse.com/project

directory

SEPTEMBER 2016

COVER See the listing for "True Colors."

HOME SOLUTIONS (pp. 13–18) Dress windows in layers *Thanks to* Cornell University; cornell.edu. Lawrence Berkeley National Lab; lbl.gov. Building Green; buildinggreen.com. Zarin Fabrics; zarinfabrics.com

BEFORE + AFTER: KITCHEN Made to order (pp. 20–24) **Designer-builder:** New Old, Fort Mill, SC; newold.com. **Kitchen > Lighting:** worldimportsdesigns.com. **Countertop:** Quartz Radianz in Appalachian Amber AU490; staron.com. **Faucet:** luxartcollection.com. **Cabinets:** Jason's Custom Woodworks, Charlotte, NC; 704-763-3303. **Paint:** Muslin 6133 (walls); sherwin-williams.com. Seed Pearl 27-32 (wall cabinets); prattandlambert.com. Fall Harvest 2168-10 (island and pantry shelves); benjaminmoore.com. **Backsplash tile:** emser.com. **Butler's pantry > Countertop:** staron.com. **Cabinets:** Jason's Custom Woodworks, Charlotte, NC; 704-763-3303. **Lighting:** lowes.com. **Cast-iron enamelware:** lecreuset.com. **Sink:** luxartcollection.com. **Windows:** windsorlegend.com

BEFORE + AFTER: LAUNDRY ROOM Neat and tidy (pp. 26–27) **Contractor and cabinetry:** Artistic Renovations of Ohio, Seven Hills, OH; artisticreno.com. **Cabinet handles:** richelieu.com. **Rug:** target.com. **Backsplash:** adexusa.com. **Shower tile:** americanolean.com. **Custom pet bed:** adorepetbeds.com

PHOTOSHOP REDO Perking up a plain Cape (p. 43) **Architect:** Frasier-Martis Architects, Omaha; fmarchitects.com

A FARMHOUSE FOR THE FUTURE (pp. 44–45) **Builder:** Dan Gainsboro, NOW Communities, Concord, MA; 978-369-6200; nowcommunities.com. **Architects:** Don Powers, principal architect, and Christina Carlson, project architect, Union Studio Architecture & Community Design, Providence, RI; unionstudioarch.com. **Interior designer:** Denise Enright Interior Design, Stamford, CT; denisedesigns@optonline.net

DO IT RIGHT (pp. 52–56) *Thanks to* Rich O'Neil, Masterwork Painting & Restoration, Woburn, MA; masterworkpainting.com

SHIPSHAPE (pp. 68–75) **Architect:** Nori Whisenand, Deer Creek Studio, Nevada City, CA; deercreekstudio.co. **Interior designer:** Stephanie Wolter, Wolter Designs; 415-425-6335. **Contractor:** Paradigm Concrete & Construction, Inc., Antioch, CA; paradigmconcrete.com. **Exterior > Paint:** Jailhouse Rock; c2paint.com. **Windows:** andersenwindows.com. **Kitchen > Cabinetry:** Jeff Ward; 510-610-3639. **Refrigerator:** subzero-wolf.com. **Sink:** rohlhome.com. **Faucet:** grohe.com.

Countertop: marbleeuropeanstyle.com. **Hood:** ventahood.com. **Hardware:** topknoobs.com. **Flooring:** blacksfarmwood.com. **Pendants:** schoolhouseelectric.com. **Sunroom/dining room > Paint:** Espionage; c2paint.com. **Table:** Custom, Heritage Salvage, Petaluma, CA; heritagesalvage.com. **End chair:** anthropologie.com. **Wall planters:** charlieecallahan.com. **Living room > Paint:** Gallery White (walls) and Milk Moustache (trim, doors); c2paint.com. **Baskets:** crateandbarrel.com. **Master bathroom > Paint:** Grand Banks; c2paint.com. **Bathroom pedestals, toilet:** kohler.com. **Sconces:** schoolhouseelectric.com. **Medicine cabinets:** restorationhardware.com. **Shower fittings:** grohe.com. **Cabinet pulls:** topknoobs.com. **Kids' bedroom > Paint:** Green Tea; c2paint.com

GREEN & SERENE (pp. 76–81) **Designer:** Janet Lohman Design; 310-471-3955. **All patio furniture fabric:** sunbrella.com. **Front garden > Planters:** charlesandcharles.com. **Main deck > Umbrellas:** pier1.com

TRUE COLORS (pp. 82–89) **Interior decorator:** Kristie Barnett, Nashville; thedecorologist.com. **Sunroom > General contractor:** Sheeler Construction, Brentwood, TN; 615-347-8063. **Windows:** monarchwindows.com. **Living room > Ceiling light fixture:** crystorama.com. **Kitchen > Flooring:** corlewandperry.com. **Range, refrigerator, and dishwasher:** geappliances.com. **Range hood:** broan.com. **Second-floor bathroom > General contractor:** Hammond & Brandt Builders, Nashville; 615-248-1818. **Wall tile:** homedepot.com. **Floor tile:** tilesshop.com. **Light fixture:** feiss.com. **Faucet:** newportbrass.com. **Vanity:** shop.ferguson.com. **Shower fixtures:** deltafaucet.com

PAINT BY NUMBERS (pp. 90–95) *Thanks to* Charlotte Cosby, head of creative, Farrow & Ball. Sue Wadden, director of color marketing, Sherwin-Williams. Dee Schlotter, national color brand manager, PPG Architectural Finishes, Inc. Erika Woelfel, vice president of color marketing, Behr

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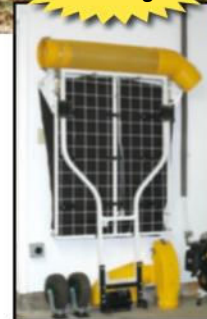


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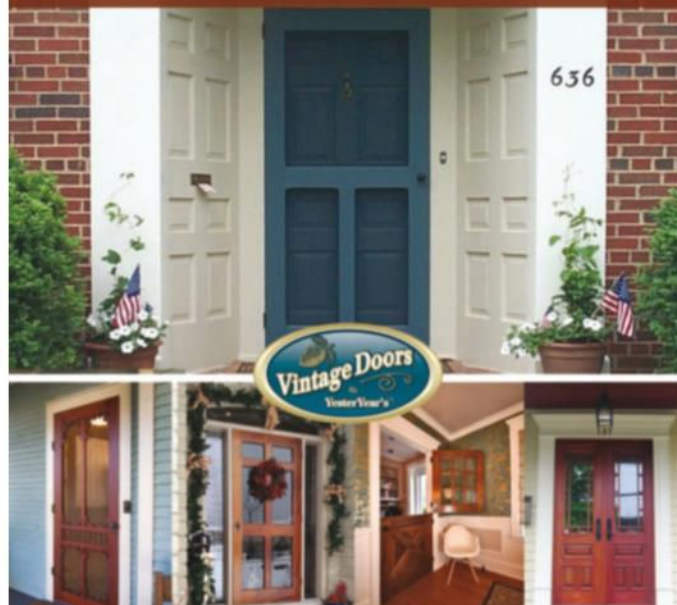


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70 gallon capacity

Customer Rating

5.0

5 Stars

SCREWDRIVER SET
32 PIECE
PITTSBURGH
LOT 61259/97/04 shown
Customer Rating
★ ★ ★ ★ ★
\$599
Temp of
a
• 580 lb.
capacity
LOT
\$209
Customer Rating
★ ★ ★ ★ ★
US
26" x 4" x 10"



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93669 Showa
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63087/63088

OT 68530/63086
33085/69671 shown

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10546068
 \$14.88
 10546068

[illegible]

comp at \$59

0144

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save ^{This Old} House

PRICE \$12,000

LOCATION Goldsboro, NC

CONTACT Maggie Gregg,
252-689-6678; mgregg@presnc.org

THE HISTORY When young Civil War veteran Joseph Peacock returned home to North Carolina in the late 1800s, he set out right away to build this Folk Victorian cottage on a large tract of land he inherited outside the town of Goldsboro. While it's unclear whether he and his wife, Hattie, had children of their own, Joseph, a member of the Grand Lodge of the North Carolina Odd Fellows, took to heart the organization's edict to "visit the sick, relieve the distressed, bury the dead, and educate the orphan." To that end he donated a 20-acre parcel for a home and school for young orphaned wards of the state.

In 1915 Joseph divided the rest of his land into salable parcels, forming the foundation of Goldsboro as it is today. After his death, the house was sold outside the family. It is now in dire need of restoration.

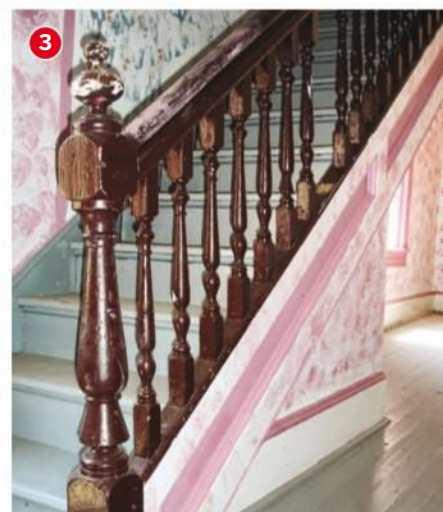
WHY SAVE IT? The locally significant house tells the story of a man more dedicated to helping those in need than to living lavishly himself. The exterior retains simple clapboard siding and porch spindlework. Inside are pine floors, an elegant balustrade, and several wood mantels.

WHAT IT NEEDS The 1,878-square-foot house will require a significant amount of work, including putting in all new systems and repairing the roof and siding; future restorations will be eligible for a state preservation tax credit. While it's a sizable job, saving this gem would create a home base for life in a charming town, just an hour from Raleigh or Durham. —PAUL HOPE



Folk Victorian with charming period details!

- 1.** The three-bedroom, two-bath house sits on a quarter-acre lot. It retains its original four-over-four windows and fishscale shingle siding in the gable.
- 2.** A simple wood mantel surrounds a wood-burning fireplace in the dining room.
- 3.** The staircase features an elaborate newel post and turned balusters.
- 4.** One of the two bathrooms holds a wall-mount sink and claw-foot tub that likely date to the 1930s.



GOT A HOUSE?

If you know of an old house that should be saved and is for sale, write to savethisoldhouse@thisoldhouse.com or This Old House, 262 Harbor Drive, Stamford, CT 06902.

PHOTOS: (CLOCKWISE FROM TOP) DAVID STREVEL; COURTESY OF PNC; (2); DAVID STREVEL

A woman with dark, wavy hair, wearing a black leather dress, stands on a dark wooden deck. She is holding a miniature, two-story yellow house with white trim and a green roof. The house has a balcony on the second floor and a flower box under the front window. The background consists of horizontal grey siding. The text "THE BEST-DRESSED HOMES WEAR AZEK®" is overlaid on the image.

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